

GLEANINGS IN GENESIS

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GLEANINGS IN GENESIS

XXV. THE BIRTH OF ISAAC: GENESIS 21

The birth of Isaac marked a pivotal point in the outworking of God's eternal purpose. The coming of this son to Abraham and Sarah was the second great step toward the fulfillment of Jehovah's plan. This purpose and plan was to have a people of His own, separate from the surrounding nations; a people to whom should be entrusted the Holy Oracles, a people of whom as concerning the flesh the Saviour was to be born; a people who should ultimately become the medium of blessing to all the earth. In the realization of this plan and purpose the first great step was the *selection* of Abram to be the father of the chosen nation, the *call* which separated him from the idolatrous people among whom he lived, and the *migration* unto the land which Jehovah promised to give him.

Some twenty-five years had now passed since Abram had left Ur of the Chaldees, and during these years he had received promise from the Lord that He would make of him a great nation (Gen. 12:2) and that He would make his seed as the dust of the earth (Gen. 13:16). But years went by and Abram remained childless: the promised seed had not been given and Abram was exercised and perplexed. "And Abram said, Lord God, what wilt Thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezar of Damascus? And Abram said, Behold, to me Thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir" (Gen. 15:2, 3). To these questions the Lord returned answer, "This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir" (Gen. 15:4). Another interval passed and yet no child appeared, and "Sarai said unto Abram, Behold, now, the Lord hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her. And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai, and he went in unto Hagar, and she conceived" (Gen. 16:2, 4). A further thirteen years dragged their weary course and

“God said unto Abraham, as for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be. And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations: Kings of people shall be of her. Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is a hundred years old? And shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear? And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before Thee! And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac” (Gen. 17:15-19). Shortly after this the Lord, accompanied by two angels, appeared unto His servant in the plains of Mamre and, “they said unto him, Where is Sarah thy wife? And he said, Behold, in the tent. And He said, I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard it in the tent door, which was behind him. Now Abraham and Sarah were old and well stricken in age; and it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also? And the Lord said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old? Is any thing too hard for the Lord? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son” (Gen. 18:9-14).

And now the appointed hour for the fulfillment of God’s promises to Abraham and Sarah had struck, and we read, “And the Lord visited Sarah as He had said, and the Lord did unto Sarah as He had spoken. For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him” (Gen. 21:12). Thus we reach, as we have said, the second stage in the accomplishment of Jehovah’s purpose. The birth of Isaac marked an important crisis in connection with the history of the chosen line, for not in Ishmael but in Isaac was Abraham’s seed to be called (Gen. 21:12).

Many are the important truths illustrated in the above Scriptures, and many are the profitable lessons to be learned therefrom. We name a few of them without attempting to enlarge. We see from the above that *God is in no hurry* in the working out of His plans. Man may fret

and fume, hurry and bustle, but Jehovah has all eternity at His disposal and works leisurely and with deliberation. Well for us to mark this attentively—"he that believeth shall not make haste" (Is. 28:16). Again, we note here *God's Almightyness*. Nothing can hinder or thwart the out-working of His purpose. Abraham may be old, Sarah may be barren, but such trifles present no difficulty to Him who is infinite in power. Abraham may seek to obtain an heir through Hagar, but Jehovah's plan cannot be foiled: Sarah's son *shall be* his heir, not Ishmael. Behold, too, the *faithfulness* of God. The Lord had *said* Sarah *shall have* a son, and what He promised He performed. His promise may seem unreasonable and impossible to the carnal mind, but His word is *sure*. Learn, also, how *faith is tried and tested*. This is in order to display its *genuineness*. A faith that is incapable of enduring trial is no faith at all. A hard thing was promised to Abraham but, "he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb: he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God" (Rom. 4:19, 20). Finally, note that *God has a set time* for the accomplishing of His will and the fulfilling of His word. Nothing is left to chance. Nothing is *contingent* on the creature. Everything is definitely fixed beforehand by God. "For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, *at the set time* of which God had spoken to him" (Gen. 21:2). Mark how this is emphasized by repetition—"But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee *at this set time* in the next year" (Gen. 17:21); "*At the time appointed* I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son" (Gen. 18:14). So also we read in another connection, "For the vision is yet for *an appointed time*, but at the end it shall speak" (Hab. 2:3). Compare Gal. 4:4.

Isaac was the child of *promise*. The Lord took great interest in the birth of this boy. More was said about him *before* his birth than about any other, excepting only Abraham's greater Son. God first made promise to Abraham; "As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be. And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her" (Gen. 17:15, 16). The response of the aged patriarch is recorded in the next verse

—"Then Abraham *fell upon his face*, and laughed." Later, the promise was renewed in the hearing of Sarah, "And He said I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son" (Gen. 18:10). Then we are told, "Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old?" How *reason* ever opposes the promises of God. The "laughter" of Abraham was the laughter of worshipful joy, that of Sarah was credulous unbelief. There *is* a laughter which *the Lord* fills the mouth with, when, at some crisis, He comes to our relief. "When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream. Then was our mouth filled with *laughter*, and our tongue with singing: then said they among the heathen, *the Lord* hath done great things for them" (Ps. 126:112). But there is also the laughter of cynicism and unbelief. The former we are not afraid to avow; the latter makes us, like Sarah, cowards and liars. But are we not told "Through *faith* also Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because *she judged him faithful* who had promised" (Heb. 11:11). How shall we harmonize this with her laugh of unbelief? To the infidel this would appear a contradiction, but the believer has no difficulty in reconciling these two, for he knows from experience there is a continual struggle going on in his heart between faith and unbelief, sometimes the one and sometimes the other being uppermost. But is it not beautiful and blessed to note that in the New Testament Sarah's unbelief is *passed over*, just as nothing is said there of Rahab's deception (Heb. 11:31), or of Job's impatience (Jas. 5:11).

Isaac was the child of *miracle*. Sarah's womb was "*dead*" (Rom. 4:19) and ere she could conceive a supernatural "strength" must be given her (Heb. 11:11). In this, of course, we discover a foreshadowment of the miraculous birth of the Lord Jesus—now, alas, so generally denied. We are tempted to digress here but must refrain. Certain it is that the vital importance of the virgin birth of our Saviour cannot be overestimated. Well did Sir Robert Anderson say, "The whole Christian system depends upon the truth of the last verse of Matthew one" ("The Coming Prince"). Returning to the miraculous birth of Isaac, do we not see in it, as also in the somewhat similar cases of

Rachel, the mother of Samson, Hannah, and Elisabeth, not only a foreshadowing of the supernatural birth of Christ, but also the gracious way of God in *preparing* Israel to believe in it, facilitating faith in the Divine incarnation. If God quickened a dead womb and caused it to bear, why should it be thought a thing incredible if He made the *virgin* give birth to the Child!

The birth of Christ was markedly foreshadowed by that of Isaac and this in *seven* ways at least. First, Isaac was the *promised* seed and son (Gen. 17:16); so also was Christ (Gen. 3:15; Is. 7:14). Second, a *lengthy interval* occurred between God's first promise to Abraham and its realization. When we are told, "And the Lord visited Sarah *as he had said*" (Gen. 21:1), the immediate reference is to 17:16 and 18:14, but the remote reference was to the original promise of 12:7. So also was there a lengthy interval between God's promise to send Christ and the actual fulfillment of it. Third, when Isaac's birth was announced, his mother asked, "Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old?" (Gen. 18:13), to which the answer was returned, "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" and the striking analogy is seen in the fact that when the angel of the Lord made known unto Mary that she was to be the mother of the Saviour, she asked, "How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?" (Luke 1:34), to which query the answer was returned, "With God nothing shall be impossible" (Luke 1:37): so that *in each case* God's *omnipotency* was affirmed following the annunciation of the birth of the child. Fourth, Isaac's *name* was specified *before* he was born—"And thou shalt call his name Isaac" (Gen. 17:19); compare with this the words of the angel to Joseph before Christ was born—"And thou shalt call his name Jesus" (Matt. 1:21)! Fifth, Isaac's birth occurred at God's *appointed* time (Gen. 21:2) "at the set time"; so also in connection with the Lord Jesus we read "But when *the fullness of time* was come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman" (Gal. 4:4). Sixth, as we have seen above, Isaac's birth required a *miracle* to bring it about; so also was it with the incarnation of Immanuel. Seventh, the name Isaac (given unto him by Abraham and not Sarah, Gen. 21:3), which means laughter, declared him to be *his father's delight*; so also was the one born at Bethlehem—"this is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." Need

we remark how strikingly this sevenfold type evidences the Divine inspiration of Scripture, and demonstrates that the book of Genesis—so much attacked by the critics—was written by one “moved by the Holy Spirit.”

It has been noticed by others that in Abraham we have a striking illustration of *election*, while in Isaac we get, typically, the precious truth of *sonship*. Abraham was the one chosen and called by God; Isaac was the one promised and born of God’s power. The *historical* order of Genesis is thus the *doctrinal* order of the New Testament. Thus we read in Eph. 1: 4, 5, “According as He hath *chosen us* in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him: in love having predestinated us *unto the adoption of children* by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will.” Isaac brings before us in type *regeneration*, and it is this which will now engage our attention.

The first point we would here dwell upon is that before Isaac was born *the power and activities of nature were made an end of*. Abraham and Sarah had come to the end of themselves. Abraham’s body was “dead,” and so too was Sarah’s womb (Rom. 4: 19). And in order for Isaac to be born that which was *dead* must be *quicken*ed, quickened by God. This is a very humbling truth; one which is thoroughly distasteful to man; one which nothing but the grace of God will enable us to receive. The state of the natural man is far worse than *he* imagines. It is not only that man is a sinner, a sinner both by nature and by practice, but that he is “*alienated from the life of God*” (Eph. 4: 18). In a word the sinner is *dead*—dead in trespasses and sins. As the father said of the prodigal, “This my son was *dead*, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found” (Luke 15: 24).

That the natural man is dead in trespasses and sins is no mere figure of speech; it is a solemn *reality*, an awful *fact*. It is ignorance and the denial of this fact which lies at the root of so much of the false teaching of our day. What the natural man needs first and foremost is not education or reformation, but *life*. It is because the sinner is dead that he needs to be born again. But how little this is pressed today! The unspeakably dreadful state of the natural man is glossed over where it is not directly repudiated. For the most part our preachers seem *afraid* to insist upon the utter

ruin and total depravity of human nature. This is a *fatal* defect in any preaching: sinners will never be brought to see their need of a Saviour until they realize their *lost* condition, and they will never discover their lost condition until they learn that they are *dead* in sin.

But what does Scripture mean when it says the sinner is "dead"? This is something which seems *absurd* to the natural man. And to him *it is* absurd. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are *foolishness unto him*: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. 2:14). To the natural man it *seems* that he is very much *alive*. Yes, and Scripture itself speaks of one that lives in pleasure as being "*dead while she liveth*" (1 Tim. 5:6). Herein lies the key to the meaning of that expression employed by our Lord in His teaching upon the Good Samaritan. Describing the condition of the natural man under the figure of one who had fallen among thieves, who had stripped him of his raiment and left him wounded by the wayside, the Saviour termed him "*half dead*" (Luke 10:30). Mark then the absolute *accuracy* of Christ's words. The sinner is "*half dead*": he is alive manward, worldward, sinward, but he is *dead Godward*! The sinner is alive naturally—physically, mentally, morally—but he is *dead spiritually*. That is why the new birth is termed a "passing from death unto life" (John 5:24). And just as the deadness of Abraham and Sarah—in their case *natural* deadness, for they but *foreshadowed* spiritual truths—had to be quickened by God before Isaac could be born, so has the sinner to be quickened by God into newness of life before he can become a son of God. And this leads us to say.

Second, before Isaac could be born God had to perform a *miracle*. As we have said, Abraham's body was "dead" and Sarah was long past the age of child-bearing. How then could *they* have a son? Sarah *laughed* at the mention of such a thing. But what was beyond the reach of nature's capacity was fully within the scope of Divine power. "Is there anything too hard for the Lord?" (Gen. 18:14). No, indeed. "Ah, Lord God, behold! Thou hast made the heaven and the earth by Thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for Thee" (Jer. 32:17).

As it was with Isaac so it is with every Christian. Before any of us could be born again God had to work a miracle.

Make no mistake on this point; regeneration is the direct result of the *supernatural* operation of God. This needs to be stressed today, for regeneration has been so misrepresented by modern evangelists that to the popular mind the "new birth" signifies nothing more than a process of reformation. But the new birth is no mere turning over of a new leaf and the endeavor to live a better life. The new birth is very much more than going forward in a religious meeting and taking the preacher's hand; very much more than signing a card and "joining the church." The new birth is an act of God's creative power, the impartation of spiritual life, the communication to us of the Divine nature itself.

Abraham and his wife—each of them nearly a hundred years old—desiring a son—what could *they* do? Nothing! absolutely nothing. God had to come in and work a miracle. And thus nature had *nothing* to glory in. So it is with us. The natural man is not only a sinner, a lost sinner, but he is a *helpless* sinner—impotent, unable to do anything of himself. If help comes it *must* come from *outside* of himself. He is, like Abraham and Sarah, *shut up to God*.

Third, the coming of Isaac into Abraham's household *aroused opposition and produced a conflict*. "And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had borne unto Abraham, *mocking*" (Gen. 21:9). In the epistle to the Galatians we are shown the *dispensational* meaning and application of this, and there we read, "But as then he that was born after the flesh (Ishmael) *persecuted* him that was born after the Spirit, *even so it is now*" (Gal. 4:29); but it is with the *individual* application of this type that we are now concerned. Ishmael exemplifies the one born after the flesh: Isaac the one born after the Spirit. When Isaac was born *the true character* of Ishmael was manifested; and so when we are born again and receive the new nature, the old nature, the flesh, then comes out in its true colors.

Just as there were *two* sons in Abraham's household, the one the product of nature, the other the gift of God and the outworking of Divine power, each standing for a totally different principle, so in the believer there are two natures which are distinct and diverse. And just as there was a *conflict* between Ishmael and Isaac, so the flesh in us lusteth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh (Gal. 5:17).

It is of first importance that the Christian, especially the young Christian, should be clear upon the two natures in the believer. The new birth is not the *improving* of the old nature, but the receiving of a new; and the receiving of the new nature does not in any wise improve the old. Not only so, the old and the new natures within the believer are in open antagonism the one to the other. We quote now from the works of one deeply respected and to which we are much indebted: "Some there are who think that regeneration is a certain change which the old nature undergoes; and, moreover, that this change is gradual in its operation until, at length, the whole man becomes transformed. That this idea is unsound, can be proved by various quotations from the New Testament. For example: The carnal mind is enmity against God. How can that which is thus spoken of ever undergo any improvement? The apostle goes on to say, "It is not subject to the law of God, *neither indeed can be.*" If it *cannot be* subject to the law of God, how can it be improved? How can it undergo any change? Do what you will with flesh, and it is flesh all the while. As Solomon says, "Though thou shouldst bray a fool in a mortar among wheat with a pestle, yet will not his foolishness depart from him" (Pro. 27:22). "There is no use seeking to make foolishness wise. You must introduce heavenly wisdom into the heart that has been hitherto only governed by folly" (C. H. M.).

Fourth, it is to be noted that it was the birth of Isaac which *revealed* the true character of Ishmael. We know practically nothing of Ishmael's life *before* the birth of Isaac, but as soon as this child of promise made his appearance the real nature of Hagar's son was made manifest. He may have been very quiet and orderly before, but as soon as the child of God's quickening-power came on the scene, Ishmael showed what he was by persecuting and mocking him. Here again the type holds good. It is not until the believer receives the *new* nature that he discovers the *real* character of the old. It is not until we are born again we learn what a horrible and vile thing the flesh is. And the discovery is a painful one: to many it is quite unsettling. To those who have supposed that regeneration is an *improving* of the old nature, the recognition of the awful depravity of the flesh comes as a shock and often destroys all peace of soul, for the young convert quickly concludes

that, after all, *he* has *not* been born again. The truth is that the recognition of the true character of the flesh and a corresponding *abhorrence* of it, is one of the plainest evidences of our regeneration, for the unregenerate man is *blind* to the vileness of the flesh. The fact that I have within me a *conflict* between the natural and the spiritual is the proof there are two natures present, and that I find the Ishmael-nature "persecuting" the Isaac-nature is only to be expected. That the Ishmael-nature appears to me to be growing *worse* only goes to prove that I now have capacity to *see* its real character, just as the *real* character of Ishmael was not revealed until Isaac was born.

Fifth, we read, "And Abraham *circumcised* his son Isaac being *eight* days old, as God had commanded him" (Gen. 21:4). Our space is exhausted and we must be very brief on these last points. The circumcising of Isaac, and later of the Israelites, was a foreshadowing of our *spiritual* circumcision: "And ye are complete in Him, which is the Head of all principality and power: in whom also ye are *circumcised* with the circumcision *made without hands*, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh *by the circumcision of Christ*" (Col. 2:10, 11). *Judicially we have been* circumcised and God no longer looks at us in the flesh but in Christ, for circumcision—typically and spiritually—is separation from the flesh, and the *eighth* day brings us on to resurrection ground—in Christ. Compare Col. 3:9, etc.

Sixth, "And the child *grew*, and was *weaned*: and Abraham made a great feast the same day that Isaac was weaned" (Gen. 21:8). Here again the type holds good. Isaac "grew" by feeding on his mother's milk. Thus, too, is it with the believer. By the new birth we are but spiritual *babes*, and our growth is brought about by feeding on the milk of the Word. "As new-born babes, desires the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may *grow thereby*" (1 Pet. 2:2). We cannot now touch upon the significance of the "great feast" above.

Seventh, "And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had borne unto Abraham mocking. Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac. And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight because of his son. And God said unto Abraham, let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the

lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called. And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, because he is thy seed. And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave it unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the child, and sent her away" (Gen. 21: 9-14). At last the conflict is over. He who "persecuted" Isaac is now "*cast out*" (Gal. 4: 29). So it will yet be with us. Judicially the life of the flesh is *already ended* for us, but practically it is still here with us and in us. But blessed be God what is true now judicially shall soon be true experimentally also. When Christ returns for us, the flesh shall be put off for ever, just as Elijah left behind him *his* earthly mantle. But mark how *accurate* our type is: not till Isaac "grew" and was "weaned" was the persecuting Ishmael cast out! Let this be our closing thought. Soon *our* Ishmael shall be cast out. Soon shall this vile body of ours be made like unto the body of Christ's glory (Phil. 3: 21). Soon shall the Saviour return and we shall be "*like Him,*" for we shall see Him as He is (John 3: 21). Blessed promise! Glorious prospect! Does not the presence of the vile flesh within us now only serve to intensify the longing for our blessed Lord's return? Then let us continue to cry daily, "Come quickly. Even so, come Lord Jesus."

XXVI. THE OFFERING UP OF ISAAC. GENESIS 22

“And it came to pass *after these things*, that God did tempt (try) Abraham” (Gen. 20:1). These words refer us back to the context, a context that is rich in typical significance. The immediate context is the twenty-first chapter, where we have recorded the Birth of Isaac—a remarkable type which, with what follows it, needs to be viewed from two standpoints: its *individual* application, and its *dispensational* application. In our last paper we considered the former, here we shall deal briefly with the latter.

The birth of Isaac awakened the enmity of Ishmael, and in consequence Sarah came to Abraham saying, “Cast out this bondwoman and her son; for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac” (21:10). From the Epistle to the Galatians (4:22-31) we learn there was a profound meaning to the act here requested by Sarah, that it possessed a dispensational significance. It is to be noted first that Sarah refers to the “inheritance”—the son of Hagar should not be “*heir with Isaac*.” Now Isaac, as we have shown in our last, not only foreshadowed the Lord Jesus in His miraculous birth, but also pointed forward to those who now become the children of God through faith in Christ Jesus. In a word, Isaac stands for Divine *sonship*. Only the *spiritual* family of promise answers to Isaac, and takes the title of “*heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ*.” Israel, *nationally*, does not inherit with the church. Hence, as Isaac in Genesis 21 foreshadowed those who are members of the Body of Christ, *Ishmael* stands for *the Nation of Israel* which is now “*cast out*” during the time that God is visiting the Gentiles and taking from among *them* a people for His name (Acts 15:14). With this key in hand let us turn to the second part of Genesis 21 and note how the course of Israel as a nation is pursued in the type.

1. “And Abraham rose up early in the morning and took bread and a bottle of water, and gave unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the child, *and sent her away*, and she departed and wandered in the wilderness of Beer-Sheba” (21:14). First we note (and we shall be as brief as possible) that Hagar and her son *became wanderers in the*

wilderness. How true the picture. Such has been Israel's portion ever since she rejected Abraham's greater Son, the Lord of Glory. Throughout all these centuries, during which God has been building the Church, the Jews have dwelt in the wilderness, and "wanderers" well describes "the nation of the weary foot!"

2. "And the water was spent in the bottle, and she cast the child under one of the shrubs" (21:15). In type, *the Holy Spirit is here taken from Israel—the water was spent*. This it is which explains the tragic "veil" which is over the heart of the Jews as they read the Scriptures (2 Cor. 3:15), for without the Spirit none can understand or draw refreshment from the Word of God.

3. "And she went and sat her down over against him a good way off, as it were a bowshot: for she said, Let me not see the death of the child. And she sat over against him and lifted up her voice *and wept*" (21:16). We see here a foreshadowment of *Jerusalem bemoaning her desolations*, and at this point the lamentations of Jeremiah are most appropriate to her condition. O, how the above type anticipated the poor Jews "wailing" before the gates of Jerusalem!

4. "And God *heard the voice of the lad*; and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven and said unto her, What aileth thee, Hagar? Fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is" (21:17). And here is where *hope* begins. It is not until the Jew *bewails his sins* (see Hosea 5:15, etc.), confesses his dreadful crime of crucifying the Son of God, not until after much bitter humiliation they shall cry, "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord" (Matt. 23:39), that Jehovah will take up again His covenant people.

5. "And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water; and she went and filled the bottle with water and gave the lad drink" (21:19). In type *the Spirit is given once more to Israel*. Just as God here "opened the eyes of Hagar," so in a near-coming day will He open the eyes of the Jews, and even during the days of the now rapidly approaching tribulation, a pious remnant shall keep the testimony of God and wash their garments in the blood of the Lamb (Rev. 14:3, 4; 20:4).

6. "And God was with the lad; and he grew, and dwelt in the wilderness, and became an archer" (21:20). Couple

with this the promise of verse 18, "For I will make him *a great nation*." How accurate the type! Thus it will be with Israel in the Millennium after God has taken into favor again the chosen race.

7. "And he dwelt in the wilderness of Paran" (21:21). Paran means "Beauty or Glory," speaking in type of Palestine, the dwelling place of Israel in the Millennium, when the wilderness shall be made to blossom as the rose, for the curse now resting on the material creation shall then be removed; and then the Shekinah Glory shall once more be in their midst.

8. "And his mother took him a wife out of the land of Egypt" (21:21). In type this allies Israel with Egypt, and thus will it be during the Millennium—"In that day shall Israel be the third *with Egypt* and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land; whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be *Egypt my people*, and Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel Mine inheritance" (Is. 19:24, 25).

9. "And it came to pass *at that time*, that Abimelech and Phichol the chief captain of his host spoke unto Abraham saying, *God is with thee* in all that thou doest" (21:22). How this reminds us that in the Millennium the Gentile will seek out the Jew, because conscious that Jehovah is once more in their midst! As it is written, "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, In those days it shall come to pass that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, "We will go with you, for we have heard that *God is with you*" (Zech. 8:23).

10. Note the close of this chapter: "And Abraham *planted a grove in Beer-Sheba*" (21:33). This action of the patriarch was deeply significant when viewed typically. It marked the change from strangership to possession. Abraham, who stands figuratively as the federal head of the nation plants a "grove" in *Beer-Sheba*, which means, "Well of the oath," for all is founded upon *the Covenant*, and thus *takes possession of the land*, for the planting of a tree emblemizes settled and long continuance—"They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for *as the days of a tree* are the days of My people, and Mine elect *shall long enjoy* the work of their hands" (Is. 64:22).

11. "And Abraham planted a grove in Beer-Sheba, and called there on the name of the Lord, *the Everlasting God*" (21: 33). Here Abraham calls not on Jehovah, nor on the Almighty, but on the Lord, "*the Everlasting God.*" So will it be when the Kingdom comes in power and glory. Instead of ceaseless change and decay in all around we see, as now, there shall be fixity, permanence, peace and blessing. Then shall Israel say, "Thou art the same, and Thy years shall have no end. The children of Thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before Thee" (Is. 102: 27, 28).

12. One more notice is given to this type and it *completes* the picture—"These are the sons of *Ishmael*, and these are their names, by their towns and by their castles; *twelve princes* according to their nations" (25: 16). In the Millennium the whole of the *twelve tribes of Israel* will be restored and raised to *princely* dignity among the nations.

And now what follows this marvellous sketch of Israel's course?—for marvellous it surely is to the anointed eye. What follows? why, that unparalleled foreshadowing of the Saviour's Death and Resurrection. And why this linking of the two together? To show us, and later the Jews, that Israel owes her Millennial blessedness, as we do our present and eternal blessings, to the precious Sacrifice of the Lamb of God. But we must leave the dispensational application of the type, and turn and consider once more its *individual* application.

In our last article we pointed out how that in seven particulars the birth of Isaac was a type of the Birth of the Lord Jesus. Now, we are to see how the offering up of Isaac upon the altar pointed forward to the Cross of Calvary.

This twenty-second chapter of Genesis has ever been a favorite one with the saints of God, and our difficulty now is to single out for mention that in it which will be most precious to our hearts and most profitable for our walk. Ere examining it in detail it should be said that this is, we believe, the only type in the Old Testament which distinctly intimated that God required a *human sacrifice*. Here it was that God first revealed the necessity for a human victim to expiate sin, for as it was man that had sinned, it must be by man, and not by sacrifice of beasts, that Divine justice would be satisfied.

1. "And He said, "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one* of the mountains which I will tell thee of" (Gen. 22:2). This is one of the very few Old Testament types that brings before us not only God the Son but also *God the Father*. Here, as nowhere else, are we shown the *Father's heart*. Here it is that we get such a wonderful foreshadowment of the *Divine* side of Calvary. Oh! how the Spirit of God lingers on the offering and the offerer, as if there must be a thorough similitude in the type of the antitype—"thy son—thine only son—whom thou lovest"! Here it is we learn, in type how that God "spared not His own Son" (Rom. 8:32). Really, this is *central* in Genesis 22. In this chapter Abraham figures much more prominently than Isaac—Isaac is shown simply (and yet how sweetly!) obeying his father's will. It is the affections of the father's heart which are here displayed most conspicuously.

2. "And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him" (22:3). Here we see in type *the Father setting apart the Son for sacrifice*. Just as we find the passover-lamb was separated from the flock four days before it was to be killed (Ex. 12:3), so here Isaac is taken by Abraham three days before he is to be offered upon the altar. This brings before us an aspect of truth exceedingly precious, albeit deeply solemn. The seizure and crucifixion of the Lord Jesus was something more than the frenzied act of those who hated Him without a cause. The cross of Christ was according to "the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God" (Acts 2:23). Herod, Pontius Pilate, the Gentiles and Jews only did "whatsoever" God's hand and counsel "determined before to be done" (Acts 4:28). Christ was the Lamb "without blemish and without spot, who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world" (1

*The writer has little doubt that the particular "mountain" upon which Isaac was bound to the altar was Calvary itself. Here, the mountain is not denominated, it was "one of the mountains" in the "land of Moriah" (it is significant that "Moriah" means "the Lord will provide"), and Calvary was one of the mountains in the land of Moriah. What seems to identify Isaac's mountain with Calvary is not only that the marvelous fullness and accuracy of *this* type would seem to *require* it, but the fact that in Gen. 22:14 *this* mount on which Isaac was offered is distinctly termed "*the mount of the Lord*." Surely this establishes it, for what other save Calvary could be thus named!

Pet. 1:20). Yes, the Lord Jesus was marked out for sacrifice from all eternity. He was, in the purpose of God, "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8). And note how this is suggested by our type, "And Abraham rose up *early* in the morning" (22:3).

3. "And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass, and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you" (22:2). Here we see in type that what took place on that mount of sacrifice *was a transaction between the Father and the Son ONLY*. How jealously God guarded these types! Nothing whatever is said of Sarah in this chapter though she figures prominently in the one before and is mentioned in the one succeeding. Abraham and Isaac must be alone. Up to the time the appointed place enters their range of vision "*two young men*" (22:3) accompany Isaac; but as they near the scene of sacrifice they are left behind (22:5). Is it without a reason we are told of these *two* men journeying with Abraham and Isaac just so far? We think not. Two is the number of witness, but there is more in it than this. These two men witnessed Isaac carrying the wood on his shoulder up the mountain, but what took place between him and his father at the altar they were not permitted to see. No; no human eye was to behold *that*. Look now at the *Anti-type*. Do you not also see *there* "*two men*," the two thieves who followed Abraham's greater son so far but who, like all the spectators of that scene, were *not permitted* to behold what transpired between the Father and the Son on the altar itself—the three hours of darkness concealing from every human eye the Divine Transaction.

4. "And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son" (22:6). This was no half-grown boy (as pictures so often represent Isaac), but a full-grown man who is here brought before us, one who could, had he so wished, have easily resisted the aged patriarch. But instead of resisting, Isaac quietly follows his father. There is no voice of protest raised to mar the scene, but he acquiesces fully by carrying the wood on his *own* shoulder. How this brings before us the Peerless One, gladly performing the Father's pleasure. There was no alienated will in Him that needed to be brought into subjection: "Lo, *I come to do Thy will, O God*," was His gladsome cry. "*I delight to do Thy will*" revealed the per-

fections of His heart. Christ and the Father were of one accord. Note how beautifully this is brought out in the type—"And they went both of them *together*:" twice repeated. We need hardly say that Isaac carrying "the wood" foreshadowed Christ bearing His cross.

5. "And he took the fire in his hand and a knife; and they went both of them together" (22:6). And he (Abraham) took *the fire* in *his* hand. Here, as everywhere in Scripture, "fire" emblemizes *Divine judgment*. It expresses the energy of Divine Holiness which ever burns against sin. It is the perfection of the Divine nature which cannot tolerate that which is evil. This was first manifested by the *flaming sword* which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life (Gen. 3:24). And it will be finally and eternally exhibited in *the Lake which burneth* with fire and brimstone. But here in our type it pointed forward to that awful storm of Divine judgment which burst upon the head of the Sin-Bearer as He hung upon the Cross, for there it was that sin, *our* sin, Christian reader, was being dealt with. Just as Isaac's father took in his hand the fire and the knife, so the beloved Son was "smitten of God, and afflicted" (Is. 53:4).

6. And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering? And Abraham said, My son, God will provide Himself a lamb for a burnt offering: So they went both of them together" (22:7, 8). These words of Abraham have a *double* meaning. They tell us that God was the One who should "*provide*" the "lamb," and they also make known the fact that the lamb was *for Himself*. God alone could supply that which would satisfy Himself. Nothing of man could meet the Divine requirements. If sacrifice for sin was ever to be found God Himself must supply it. And mark, the "lamb" was not only provided *by* God but it was also *for* God. Before blessing could flow forth to men the claims of Divine holiness and justice must be met. It is true, blessedly true, that Christ died for sinners, but He first died (and this is what we are in danger of forgetting) *for God*, i. e., as the Holy Spirit expresses it through the apostle, "to declare *His* righteousness . . . that He might be just, *and* the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. 3:26). Note how this comes out in our passage: it is

not "God Himself will provide a lamb," but "God will *provide Himself* a lamb"—put this way, abstractly, so as to take in *both* of these truths.

7. "And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood. And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. And the Angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham, and he said, Here am I. And he said, Lay not Thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me. And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and beheld behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son. And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-Jireh: as it is said to this day. In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen" (22:9-14). Here the type passes from Isaac to the ram offered up—"offered up in his stead"—a beautiful foreshadowment of Christ dying in the stead of sinners who are, as Isaac was, *already in the place of Death*, "bound," unable to help themselves, with the knife of Divine justice suspended over them. Here it was that the *Gospel* was "preached unto Abraham" (Gal. 3:8). Similarly in other scriptures we find this *double* type (both Isaac and the ram) as in the sweet savor and the sin offerings, the two goats on the Day of Atonement, the two birds at the cleansing of the leper.

8. "By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, In Isaac shall thy seed be called, accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, *from whence also he received him in a figure*" (Heb. 11:17-19). From this scripture we learn that Gen. 22 presents to us in type not only Christ offered upon the altar, but Christ raised again from the dead, *and that on the third day, too*, for it was on "the third day" Abraham received Isaac back again, for during the three days that elapsed from the time Abraham received command from God to offer him up as a burnt offering, his son was as good as dead to him. And now to complete this won-

derful picture, observe how Gen. 22 anticipated, in type, *the Ascension of Christ!* It is very striking to note that after we read of Isaac being laid upon the altar (from which Abraham received him back) *nothing further is said of him in Gen. 22.* Mark carefully the wording of verse 19—"So Abraham returned unto his young men, and they rose up and went together to Beer-Sheba." Our type leaves Isaac *up in the mount!*

This article would not be complete did we say nothing about the remarkable trial of Abraham's faith and of the Divine grace which sustained him, yet, a very brief word is all we now have space for.

The spiritual history of Abraham was marked by four great crises, each of which involved the surrender of something which was *naturally* dear to him. First, he was called on to separate himself from his native land and kindred (Gen. 12:1); Second, he was called on to give up Lot (Gen. 13:1-18); Third, he had to abandon his cherished plan about Ishmael (Gen. 17:17, 18); Fourth, God bade him offer up Isaac as a burnt offering. The life of the believer is a series of tests, for only by discipline can Christian character be developed. Frequently there is one supreme test, in view of which all others are preparatory. So it was with Abraham. He had been tested again and again, but never as here. God's demand is, "Son, give Me thine heart (Pro. 23:26). It is not our intellect, our talents, our money, but our *heart*, God asks for first. When we have responded to God's requirement, He lays His hand on something especially near and dear to us, to prove the *genuineness* of our response, for God requireth truth in the inward parts and not merely on the lips. Thus He dealt with Abraham. Let us consider now, *The Time of Abraham's Trial.*

It was "after these things" that God did try Abraham; that is, it was after the twenty-five years of waiting, after the promise of a seed had been frequently repeated, after hope had been raised to the highest point, yea, after it had been turned to enjoyment and Isaac had reached man's estate. Probably Abraham thought that when Isaac was born his trials were at an end; if so, he was greatly mistaken. Let us look now at, *The Nature of Abraham's Trial.*

Abraham was bidden to take his *son*—and what? Deliver him to some other hand to sacrifice? No: be thou thyself the priest; go, offer him up for a burnt offering.

This was a staggering request! When Ishmael was thirteen years old, Abraham could have been well contented to have gone without another son, but when Isaac was born and had entwined himself around the father's heart, to part with him thus must have been a fearful wrench. Add to this, the three days' journey, Isaac having to carry the wood and Abraham the knife and fire up the mountainside, and above all, the cutting question of the son asked in the simplicity of his heart, without knowing he himself was to be the victim—"Behold the fire and the wood: *but where* is the lamb for a burnt offering?" (22:8)—this would seem to be more than the human heart could bear. Yet, this shock to Abraham's natural affection was not the severest part of the trial. What must it have been to his *faith*. It was not only that Isaac was his son, but *the promised seed*, the one in whom all the great things spoken of the seed were to be fulfilled. When he was called to give up his other son God condescended to give him a reason for it, but here no reason was given. In the former case, though Ishmael must go, it was because he was not the child of promise ("in Isaac shall thy seed be called"), but if Isaac goes who shall substitute for him? To offer up Isaac was to sacrifice the very object of faith! Turn now and consider, *Abraham's Response*.

Mark his *promptitude*. There was no doubt or delay, and no reluctance or hesitation; instead, he "rose up *early* in the morning." There was no opposition either from natural affection or unbelief, rather did he bow in absolute submission to the will of God. Faith triumphed over natural affection, over reason, and over self-will. Here was a most striking demonstration of the efficacy of Divine grace which can subdue every passion of the human heart and every imagination of the carnal mind, bringing all into unrepining acquiescence to God. And what was the effect of this trial upon Abraham? He was amply rewarded, for he discovered something in God he never knew before, or at most knew imperfectly, namely, that God was Jehovah-Jireh—the *Lord who would provide*. It is only by passing through trials that we learn what God is—His grace, His faithfulness, His sufficiency. May the Lord grant both writer and reader more of that power of faith which, with open hand, takes every blessing which God gives us, and with open hand gives back to Him, in the spirit of worship, whatever He may ask of us.

XXVII. THE MAN ISAAC: GENESIS 26

In our last two articles we have been occupied more particularly with the *person* of Isaac, now we are to review his *history*. It is noticeable that though Isaac lived the longest of the four great patriarchs yet less is recorded of him than of the others: some twelve chapters are devoted to the biography of Abraham, and a similar number each to Jacob and Joseph, but excepting for one or two brief mentionings, before and after, the *history* of Isaac is condensed into a single chapter. Contrasting his character with those of his father and son, we may remark that of Isaac there is noted less of Abraham's triumphs of faith and less of Jacob's failures.

As we have seen in our previous studies Isaac, typically, represents *sonship*. In perfect consonance with this we may note how he was appointed *heir* of all things. Said Eliazer to Bethuel, "And Sarah my master's wife bare a son to my master when she was old: *and unto him hath he given all that he hath*" (24: 36). Observe how this is repeated for sake of emphasis in 25: 5—"And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac." In the type this pointed first to Abraham's greater Son, "Whom He (God) hath appointed Heir of all things" (Heb. 1: 2). But it is equally true of all those who are through faith the children of Abraham and the children of God—"And if children, *then heirs*: heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ" (Rom. 8: 17). As with Isaac, so with us: all the wealth of the Father's house is ours! But Isaac not only represented the believer's sonship and heirship, but he also foreshadowed *our heavenly calling*. As is well known to most of our readers, the land of Canaan typified the Heavens where is our citizenship (Phil. 3: 20) and our spiritual warfare (Eph. 6: 12). Hence it was that Isaac alone of the patriarchs *is never seen outside the Land*. This is the more noticeable and striking when we remember how that Abraham, Jacob and Joseph each did leave the Land, for a time at least.

Having looked at Isaac *mystically* we shall now consider him *morally*. The first thing we read about him after the remarkable scene pictured in Gen. 22 is that "Isaac came

from the way of the well Lahai-roi; for he dwelt in the south country. And Isaac went out to meditate (or pray) in the field at the eventide" (24: 62, 63). This gives us a good insight into Isaac's character. He was of the quiet and retiring order. He had not the positive, active, aggressive disposition of his eminent father, but was gentle and retiring and unresisting. In One only do we find *all* the Divine graces and perfections.

Isaac was essentially the man of the well. Abraham was markedly the man of the altar, Jacob specially the man of the tent but that which was most prominent in connection with Isaac was the "well." The first thing said of Isaac after he was bound to the altar (Gen. 22) is, "Isaac came from the way of the well Lahai-roi" (24: 62). This is very striking coming as *the next* mention of Isaac after we have seen Christ typically slain, resurrected and ascended (compare our last article on Gen. 22). Hence that which follows here in the type is the figure of *the Holy Spirit's operations*—as succeeding Christ's Ascension! But returning to Isaac and the well. The next time he is referred to we are told, "And it came to pass after the death of Abraham, that God blessed his son Isaac; and Isaac dwelt by the *well* Lahai-roi" (25: 11). And again we read, "And Isaac departed thence, and pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there. And Isaac digged again *the wells* of water which they had digged in the days of Abraham his father; for the Philistines had stopped them" (26: 18, 19). For further references see Gen. 26: 20, 21, 22, 25. It is very striking and significant that the name of Isaac is associated with "wells" just *seven* times, not less, not more. Undoubtedly there is some important lesson to be gathered from this.

A well differs from a cistern, in that it is the place of *running* water. What a marvelous hint of the *typical* meaning of Isaac's well is that found in 26: 19!—"And Isaac's servants digged in the valley, and found there a well of *springing* water," the margin gives, "of *living* water"! Water is imperative for the maintenance of the natural life; so, too, is it with the spiritual. The first need of the believer is the "living water," that is, the Spirit acting through the Word. "The way that water ministers to life and growth is indeed a beautiful type of the Spirit's action. Without water a plant will die in the midst of

abundance of food in actual contact with its roots. Its office is to make food to be assimilated by the organism, and to give power to the system itself to take it up" (F. W. G.).

The *first* well by which Isaac is seen is that of Lahai-roi (24:62; 25:11), the meaning of which is, "Him that liveth and seeth me" (See 16:14). It told of the unfailing care of the ever-living and ever-present God. And where is such a "well" to be found to-day? Where is it we are brought to *realize* the presence of this One? Where but in the Holy Scriptures! The Word of God ministered to us by the power and blessing of the Spirit is that which reveals to *us* the presence of God. The "well," then, typifies the place to which the son is brought—into the presence of God. His *remaining* there, practically, depends upon his use of and obedience to the Word.

We have just looked at Isaac by the Well of Lahai-roi; did he *remain* there? What do you suppose is the answer, reader? Could you not supply it from your own experience! "And there was a famine in the land, besides the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac *went unto Abimelech*, king of the Philistines unto Gerar" (26:1). Isaac's departure from the well Lahai-roi to Gerar typifies the *failure* of the son (the believer) to maintain his standing in the presence of God and his enjoyment of Divine fellowship. But is it not blessed to read next, "And the Lord appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of. Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will *bless* thee, for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I swore unto Abraham thy father" (26:2, 3). Apparently, Isaac was on his way to *Egypt*, like his father before him in time of famine, and would have gone there had not the Lord appeared to him and arrested his steps. In passing, we would remark that here we have a striking illustration of the *sovereign ways* of God. To Isaac the Lord appeared and stayed him from going down to Egypt, yet under precisely similar circumstances He appeared not unto Abraham!

"And Isaac dwelt in Gerar" (26:6). Gerar was the *borderland* midway between Canaan and Egypt. Note that God had said to Isaac, "*Sojourn* in this land" (v. 3), but

Isaac "*dwelt*" there (v. 6), and that "a *long time*" (v. 8). Mark now the *consequence* of Isaac settling down in Gerar—type of the believer *out of* communion. He *sinned* there! "And the men of the place asked him of his wife; and he said, She is my sister: for he feared to say, She is my wife; lest, said he, the men of the place should kill me for Rebekah; because she was fair to look upon" (26:7). Isaac thus repeated the sin of Abraham (Gen. 20:1, 2). What are we to learn from Isaac thus following the evil example of his father? From others we select two thoughts. First, the readiness with which Isaac followed in the way of Abraham suggests that it is much easier for children to imitate the vices and weaknesses of their parents than it is to emulate their virtues, and that the sins of the parents are frequently perpetuated in their children. Solemn thought this! But, second, Abraham and Isaac were men of vastly different temperament, yet each succumbed to the same temptation. When famine arose each *fled to man* for help. When in the land of Abimelech each was afraid to own his wife as such. Are we not to gather from this that no matter what our natural temperament may be, unless the grace of God supports and sustains us we shall inevitably fall! What a warning!

"Then Isaac sowed in that land, and received in the same year a hundred-fold: and the Lord blessed him. And the man waxed great, and went forward, and grew until he became very great" (26:12, 13). Most of the commentators have had difficulty with these verses and have resorted to various ingenuities to explain this prosperity of Isaac while he was out of communion with God. But the difficulty vanishes if we look at the above statement in the light of v. 3, where the Lord had said, "I will bless thee"—a promise given *before* Isaac had practised this deception upon Abimelech. That this is the true interpretation appears from the word "bless." God had said, "I will bless thee" (v. 3), and v. 12 records the fulfillment of God's promise, for here we read, "And the Lord *blessed* him." The failure of Isaac between the time when God made promise and its fulfillment only affords us a striking illustration of that blessed word, "He is *faithful* that promised" (Heb. 10:23)! Yes, blessed be His name, even "if we believe not, yet He abideth faithful: He cannot deny Himself" (2 Gen. 2:13).

Next we are told, "And Abimelech said unto Isaac, *Go from us*; for thou art much mightier than we" (26:16). Was not this *God* speaking to Isaac, speaking *at a distance* (through Abimelech) and not yet directly!

"And Isaac departed thence, and pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there. And Isaac digged again the wells of water, which they had digged in the days of Abraham his father; for the Philistines had stopped them after the death of Abraham; and he called their names after the names by which his father had called them" (26:17, 18). In digging again these wells of Abraham which had been stopped up by the Philistines, Isaac appears to typify Christ who, at the beginning of the New Testament, dispensation re-opened the Well of Living Water which had, virtually, been blocked up by the traditions and ceremonialism of the Pharisees.

"And Isaac's servants digged in the valley, and found there a well of springing water. And the herdsmen of Gerar did *strive* with Isaac's herdmen, saying, The water is ours....And they digged another well and strove for that also....And he *removed* from thence and digged another well" (26:19-22). Again we would ask, Was not this "strife" God's way of leading his child back to Himself again! But note also the lovely moral trait seen here in Isaac, namely, his nonresistance of evil. Instead of standing up for his "rights," instead of contending for the wells which he had dug, he quietly "removed" to another place. In this he beautifully points out the path which the Christian should follow: "For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, ye suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God" (1 Pet. 2:19, 20). We need hardly remind the reader that the attitude displayed by Isaac, as above, was that of the Saviour who "when He was reviled, reviled not again."

"And he went *up* from thence to Beersheba" (26:23). Mark here the topographical reference which symbolized Isaac's moral ascent and return to the place of communion, for "Beersheba" means the Well of the Oath. In full accord with this behold the blessed sequel—"And the Lord appeared unto him *the same night* and said, I am the God

of Abraham thy father; fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed for My servant Abraham's sake" (26:24). On the very night of Isaac's return to Beersheba the Lord "appeared unto" him!

"And he builded an altar there, and called upon the name of the Lord, and pitched his tent there: and there Isaac digged a well" (26:25). Mark how the "altar" is mentioned before the "tent"—there was no mention of any altar in Gerar! How striking, too, that next we read, "Then Abimelech went to him from Gerar, and Ahurzzath one of his friends, and Phichol the chief captain of his army" (26:26). Personal blessings from the Lord was not the only result of his return to Beersheba. Abimelech seeks him out, not now to distress him (we no longer read of any "striving" for *this* last well), but to ask a favor. And they said, "We certainly saw that the Lord was with thee: and we said, Let there be now an oath betwixt us, even betwixt us and thee, and let us make a covenant with thee" (26:28). Now that our patriarch has entered again the path of God's will, those who formerly were his enemies seek him and bear witness to the presence of God with him. An illustration is this that "when a man's ways please the Lord, He maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him" (Pro. 16:7).

"And he (Isaac) made them a *feast*, and they did eat and drink. And they rose up betimes in the morning, and sware one to another: and Isaac sent them away, and they departed from him in peace" (26:30, 31). Above we called attention to how meekly Isaac suffered wrong when the Philistines strove for his wells, but here we may mark his failure to manifest another grace which ought always to accompany meekness. There is a meekness which is according to nature, but usually this degenerates into weakness. The meekness which is of the Spirit will not set aside the requirements of righteousness, but will maintain the claims of God. And here Isaac failed. To forgive is Christian; but with that there must be faithfulness in its season. "If thy brother trespass against thee, *rebuke* him; and if he repent, forgive him" (Luke 17:3). Abimelech had clearly wronged him, but instead of dealing with Abimelech's conscience, Isaac made him a "feast." This was amiable, no doubt, but it was not upholding the claims of righteousness. Contrast the conduct of Abraham under similar circum-

stances—"And Abraham *reproved* Abimelech because of a well of water, which Abimelech's servants had violently taken away" (Gen. 21:25)!

"And Esau was forty years old when he took to wife Judith, the daughter of Beeri *the Hittite*, and Bashemath, the daughter of Elon the Hittite: which were *a grief of mind* unto Isaac and to Rebekah" (26:34 and 35). This is sad, and points a solemn warning to us. Marriage is a momentous undertaking, and for one of the Lord's people to unite with a worldling is to court disaster as well as to dishonor Christ. Jehovah's instructions to Israel were very pointed: under no circumstances must they marry a Canaanite (Deut. 7:3). In the times covered by the book of Genesis, though apparently no divine law had been given respecting it, yet the mind of God was clearly understood. This is evident from the care which Abraham took to secure Isaac a wife from among his own people (Gen. 24), thus did he prevent Isaac from marrying a daughter of Canaan. But Isaac was careless about this matter. He failed to watch over his children so as to anticipate mischief. Esau married a daughter of the Hittites. God could not say of Isaac as he had of his father, "For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord" (Gen. 18:19). However, that Isaac had within him a righteous soul to be "vexed" is clear from the words, "which were *a grief of mind* unto Isaac and to Rebekah" (26:35).

We reserve for our next article a detailed examination of Genesis 27. Suffice it now to refer barely to the incident which is well known to our readers. Isaac was one hundred and forty years old and was fearful that death might soon overtake him. He therefore prepares to perform the last religious act of a patriarchal priest and bestow blessing upon his sons. But mark how that instead of seeking guidance from God in prayer his mind is occupied with a feast of venison. Not only so, but he seeks to reverse the expressed will of God and bestow upon Esau what the Lord had reserved for Jacob. But whatsoever a man soweth *that* shall he also reap. Isaac acts in the energy of the flesh, and Rebekah and Jacob deal with him on the same low level. And here the history of Isaac terminates! After charging Jacob not to take a wife from the daughters of Canaan (28:1) he disappears from the scene and nothing

further is recorded of him save his death and burial (35: 27-29). As another has said, "instead of wearing out, Isaac rusted out," rusted out as a vessel no longer fit for the master's use.

"Was Isaac, I ask, a vessel marred on the wheel? Was he a vessel laid aside as not fit for the Master's use? or at least not fit for it any longer? His history seems to tell us this. Abraham had not been such an one. All the distinguishing features of 'the stranger here,' all the proper fruits of that energy that quickened him at the outset, were borne in him and by him to the very end. We have looked at this already in the walk of Abraham. Abraham's leaf did not wither. He brought forth fruit in old age. So was it with Moses, with David, and with Paul. They die with their harness on, at the plough or in the battle. Mistakes and more than mistakes they made by the way, or in their cause, or at their work; but they are never laid aside. Moses is counselling the camp near the banks of the Jordan; David is ordering the conditions of the Kingdom, and putting it (in its beauty and strength) into the hand of Solomon; Paul has his armour on, his loins girded. When, as I may say, the time of their departure was at hand, the Master, as we may read in Luke 12, found them 'so doing,' as servants should be found. But thus was it not with Isaac. Isaac is laid aside. For forty long years we know nothing of him; he had been, as it were, decaying away and wasting. The vessel was rusting till it rusted out.

"There is surely meaning in all this, meaning for our admonition. And yet—such is the fruitfulness and instruction of the testimonies of God—there are others in Scripture, of other generations, who have still more solemn lessons and warnings for us. It is humbling to be *laid aside* as no longer fit for use; but it is sad to be left merely to *recover ourselves*, and it is terrible to remain to *defile ourselves*. And illustrations of all this moral variety we get in the testimonies of God. *Jacob*, in his closing days in Egypt, is not as a vessel laid aside, but he is there recovering himself. I know there are some truly precious things connected with him during those seventeen years that he spent in that land, and we could not spare the lesson which the Spirit reads to us out of the life of Jacob in Egypt. But still, the moral of it is this—a saint, who had been under holy discipline, recovering himself, and yielding

fruit, meet for recovery. And when we think of it a little, that is but a poor thing. But *Solomon* is a still worse case. He lives to defile himself; sad and terrible to tell it. This was neither Isaac nor Jacob—it was not a saint simply laid aside, nor a saint left to recover himself. Isaac was, in the great moral sense, blameless to the end, and Jacob's last days were his best days; but of Solomon we read, 'It came to pass, *when Solomon was old*, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods,' and this has made the writing over his name, the tablet to his memory, equivocal, and hard to be deciphered to this day.

"Such lessons do Isaac and Jacob and Solomon, in these ways, read for us, beloved—such are the minute and various instructions left for our souls in the fruitful and living pages of the oracles of God. They give us to see, in the house of God, vessels fit for use and kept in use even to the end—vessels laid aside, to rust out rather than to wear out—vessels whose best service is to get themselves clean again—and vessels whose dishonor it is, at the end of their service, to contract some fresh defilement." (J. G. Bellett, "The Patriarchs.")

XXVIII. ISAAC BLESSING HIS SONS: GENESIS 27

Let us look at the two sons who were to receive the blessing. They are first brought before us in Gen. 25:20-26—"And Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah to wife, the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Padan-Aran, the sister to Laban the Syrian. And Isaac entreated the Lord for his wife, because she was barren and the Lord was entreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceived. And the children struggled together within her; and she said, If it be so, why am I thus? And she went to enquire of the Lord. And the Lord said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger. And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb. And the first came out red, all over like a hairy garment; and they called his name Esau. And after that came his brother out, and his hand took hold on Esau's heel; and his name was called Jacob: and Isaac was three-score years old when she bare them." We reserve our comments on this passage until our next article on Jacob, and pass on now to the well-known incident of Esau selling his birthright.

"And the boys grew: and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents. And Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison; but Rebekah loved Jacob. And Jacob sod pottage: and Esau came from the field, and he was faint: And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage; for I am faint: therefore was his name called Edom. And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright. And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me? And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he sware unto him: and he sold his birthright unto Jacob. Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentiles; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright." (Gen. 25:27-34.) There is far more beneath the surface here (as in all Scripture) than meets the eye at first glance. Esau and Jacob are to be considered as

representative characters. Esau typifies the unbeliever, Jacob the man of faith. Every line in the brief sketch that is here given of their characters is profoundly significant.

Esau was "a cunning hunter" (v. 27). The "*hunter*" tells of the roving, daring, restless nature that is a stranger to peace. A glance at the concordance will show that the word "hunter" is invariably found in an *evil* connection (cf. 1 Sam. 24:11; Job 10:16; Psa. 140:11; Prov. 6:26; Micah 7:2; Ezek. 13:18). "*Search*" is the antithesis, the *good* word, the term used when God is *seeking* His own. Only two men in Scripture are specifically termed "hunters," namely, Nimrod and Esau, and they have much in common. The fact that Esau is thus linked together with Nimrod, the rebel, reveals his true character.

Next we are told that Esau was "a man of the field" (v. 27). In the light of Matt. 13:38—"The field is the world"—it is not difficult to discern the spiritual truth illustrated in the person of Esau. He was, typically, a man of the world. In sharp contrast from what we are told of Esau, two things are said of Jacob:—he was "a plain man; dwelling in tents" (v. 27). The Hebrew for "plain" is "tam," which is translated in other passages "perfect," "upright," "undefiled." The reference is to his character. The "dwelling in tents" denotes that he was a stranger and pilgrim in this scene; having here no abiding city, but seeking one to come.

"And Jacob sod pottage: and Esau came from the field, and he was faint." Here again the contrast between the two sons of Isaac is sharp and instructive. Jacob was occupied with the affairs of the *house*, cooking a meal, and enjoying his portion,* whereas Esau was again connected with the "field" and is "faint." Remembering what we have seen above, namely, that Esau is to be viewed as a *representative character*, a man of the world, this next line in the picture is highly suggestive. Esau returns from the field without his venison, hungry and faint. Such is ever the case with the worldling. There is nothing to be found in the "field" which can satisfy, or, to drop the figure, the world affords nothing that is able to meet man's spiritual needs, for be it noted, that man in contrast from the beasts, is essentially a spiritual being. No; over all the systems of this poor world it is written "Whosoever drinketh of this

*Note in 2 Kings 4:38-40 "pottage" was the food of God's prophets.

water shall thirst again." It cannot be otherwise. How can a world into which *sin* has entered, which is *away from God*, and which "*lieth in the Wicked One*" furnish anything which can truly meet the need of the heart that, consciously or unconsciously, ever panteth after God! Esau's experience was but that of Solomon at a later date, and of many another since—vanity and vexation of spirit is the only portion for those who seek contentment "*under the sun*." So it is now. Only the Jacobs—the objects of God's grace—possess that which appeases the hunger of the inner man.

"And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage for I am faint." It is a pity that the translators of our noble King James Version should have obscured the meaning here by inserting in italics the word "pottage." As it so frequently the case the words in italics, put in to convey a better sense, only *hide* the real sense. So it is here. In v. 29 the word "pottage" is employed by the Holy Spirit to denote the portion which Jacob enjoyed. But here in v. 30 what Esau really says is "Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red," and this was all he said. He was *ignorant* of even the name of that which was Jacob's. No doubt he was thoroughly versed in the terms of the chase, but of the things of the house, of the portion of God's chosen, he *knew not*—"Therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not" (1 John 3:1).

"And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright," etc. (v. 31). Here Jacob offers to *buy from* Esau what was his by the free bounty of God. A word now concerning this "birthright." The birthright was a most cherished possession in those days. It consisted of the excellency of dignity and power, usually a double portion (see Gen. 49:3 and Deut. 21:17). In connection with the family of Abraham there was a peculiar blessing attached to the birthright: it was spiritual as well as temporal in its nature. "The birthright was a spiritual heritage. It gave the right of being the priest of the family or clan. It carried with it the privilege of being the depository and communicator of the Divine secrets. It constituted a link in the line of descent by which the Messiah was to be born into the world." (F. B. M.)

Esau reveals his true character by saying "Behold, I am going to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me?" These words show what a low estimate he placed upon "the blessing of Abraham." *This* birthright he contemptuously termed it. We think, too, that in the light of the surrounding circumstances Esau's utterance here explains the word of the Holy Spirit in Heb. 12: 16—"Lest there be any fornicator, or *profane* person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright." Surely Esau did not mean he would die of hunger unless he ate immediately of the pottage, for that is scarcely conceivable when he had access to all the provisions in Isaac's house. Rather does it seem to us that what he intended was, that in a little time at most, he would be dead, and then of what account would the promises of God to Abraham and his seed be to him—I cannot live on promises, give me something to eat and drink, for to-morrow I die, seems to be the force of his words.

The next time Esau is mentioned is at the close of Gen. 26: there we read "And Esau was forty years old when he took to wife Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Bashemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite: which were a grief of mind unto Isaac and to Rebekah." We cannot do better than quote from Mr. Grant:—"This is the natural sequel of a profanity which could esteem the birthright at the value of a mess of pottage. These forty years are a significant hint to us of a completed probation. In his two wives, married at once, he refuses at once the example and counsel of his father, and by his union with Canaanitish women disregarded the Divine sentence, and shows unmistakably the innermost recesses of the heart."

We are now ready to look at the sad scene which Gen. 27 presents to us. "And it came to pass, that when Isaac was old, and his eyes were dim, so that he could not see, he called Esau his eldest son, and said unto him, My son: and he said unto him, Behold, here am I. And he said, Behold now, I am old, I know not the day of my death: Now therefore take, I pray thee, thy weapons, thy quiver and thy bow, and go out to the field, and take me some venison; And make me savory meat, such as I love, and bring it to me, that I may eat; that my soul may bless thee before I die" (Gen. 27: 1-4). Why was it that Isaac desired to partake of venison from Esau *before* blessing

him? Does not Gen. 25:28 answer the question—"And Isaac loved Esau *because* he did eat of his venison." In view of this statement it would seem, then, that Isaac desired to enkindle or intensify his affections for Esau, so that he might bless him with all his heart. But surely Isaac's eyes were "dim" spiritually as well as physically. Let us not forget that what we read here at the beginning of Gen. 27 follows immediately after the record of Esau marrying the two heathen wives. Thus it will be seen that Isaac's wrong in being partial to Esau was greatly aggravated by treating so lightly his son's affront to the glory of Jehovah—and all for a meal of venison! Alas, what a terrible thing is the flesh with its "affections and lusts" *even in a believer*, yea, more terrible than in an unbeliever. But worst of all, Isaac's partiality toward Esau was a plain disregard of God's word to Rebekah that Esau should "serve" Jacob (Gen. 25:23). By comparing Heb. 11:20 with Rom. 10:7 it is certain that Isaac had himself "heard" this.

"And Rebekah heard when Isaac spake to Esau his sonand Rebekah spake unto Jacob her son. . . .Now therefore, my son, obey my voice according to that which I command thee. Go now to the flock, and fetch me from thence two good kids of the goats; and I will make them savory meat for thy father, such as he loveth: And thou shalt bring it to thy father, that he may eat, and that he may bless thee before his death" (vs. 6-10). How like Sarah before her, who, in a similar "evil hour" imagined that she could give effect to the Divine promise by fleshly expediences (Gen. 16:2). As another has suggested "they both acted on that God dishonoring proverb that 'The Lord helps those who help themselves,'" whereas the truth is, the Lord helps those who have come to the *end* of themselves. If Rebekah really had confidence in the Divine promise she might well have followed tranquilly the path of duty, assured that in due time God would Himself bring His word to pass.

"And Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, Behold, Esau my brother is a hairy man, and I am a smooth man: My father peradventure will feel me, and I shall seem to him as a deceiver; and I shall bring a curse upon me, and not a blessing" (vs. 11, 12). How the character of Jacob comes out here! He reveals his native shrewdness and foresight, but instead of shrinking back in horror from the sin, he

appears to have been occupied only with what might prove its unpleasant consequences.

“And his mother said unto him, Upon me be thy curse, my son: only obey my voice, and go fetch me them. And he went and fetched, and brought them to his mother: and his mother made savory meat, such as his father loved. And Rebekah took goodly raiment of her eldest son, Esau, which were with her in the house, and put them upon Jacob her younger son: And she put the skins of the kids of the goats upon his hands, and upon the smooth of his neck: And she gave the savory meat and the bread, which she had prepared, into the hand of her son Jacob” (vs. 13-17). It is difficult to say who was most to blame, Jacob or his mother. Rebekah was the one to whom God had directly made known His purpose respecting her two sons, and, be it noted, the wife of Isaac was no heathen but, instead, one who knew the Lord—cf. “She went to enquire of the Lord” (25:22). Her course was plain: she should have trusted the Lord to bring to nought the carnal design of Isaac, but she took the way of the flesh, plotted against her husband, and taught her son to deceive his father. Yet in condemning Rebekah we are reminded of Rom. 2:1, “Therefore thou art inexcusable O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.”

We refrain from quoting at length the verses that follow. Jacob complies with his mother’s suggestion, and adds sin to sin. First he impersonates his brother, tells lies to his father, and ends by going the awful length of bringing in the name of the Lord God (v. 20). To what fearful lengths will sin quickly lead us once we take the first wrong step! A similar progression in evil is seen (by way of implication) in Psa. 1:1: the one who “walks” in the counsel of the ungodly will soon be found “standing” in the way of sinners, and then it will not be long ere he is discovered “sitting” in the seat of the scornful.

At first suspicious, Isaac’s fears were allayed by his son’s duplicity, and the blessing was given, “and he came near and kissed him: and he smelled the smell of his raiment, and blessed him, and said, See, the smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed: Therefore God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine: Let people serve thee,

and nations bow down to thee: be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee: cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee" (vs. 27-29). It is to be noted that the "blessing" which Jacob here receives from the lips of his father was far below the blessed string of promises which he received directly from God when wholly cast upon His grace (see 28: 13-15).

We need not tarry long on the pathetic sequel. No sooner had Jacob left his father's presence than Esau comes in with his venison and says, "let my father arise and eat of his son's venison, that thy soul may bless me." Then it is that Isaac discovers the deception that has been practiced upon him, and he "trembled very exceedingly." Esau learns of his brother's duplicity, and with a great and exceeding bitter cry says, "Bless me, even me also, O my father." only to hear Isaac say, "Thy brother came with subtlety, and hath taken away thy blessing.... behold I have made him thy lord." Esau renews his request saying, "Hast thou but one blessing, my father? Bless me, even me, also." Then it was that Isaac uttered that prophecy that received such a striking fulfillment in the centuries that followed—"Behold, thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above; And by thy sword shalt thou live, and shalt serve thy brother: and it shall come to pass when thou shalt have the dominion, that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck" (vs. 39, 40). For Esau "serving his brother" see 2 Sam. 8: 14 (David was a descendant of Jacob); and for "thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck" see 2 Chron. 21: 8.

Above we have noticed that when Isaac discovered that he had blessed Jacob instead of Esau he "trembled very exceedingly." This was the turning point in the incident, the point where, for the first time, light breaks in on this dark scene. It was horror which was awakened in his soul as he now fully realized that he had been pitting himself against the expressed mind of Jehovah. It is beautiful to notice that instead of "cursing" Jacob (as his son had feared, see v. 12) now that Isaac discovers how God had graciously overruled his wrong doing, he bowed in self-judgment, and "trembled with a great trembling greatly" (margin). Then it was that faith found expression in the words "And he *shall* be blest" (v. 33). He knew now that God had been securing what He had declared before the sons

were born. It is this which the Spirit seizes on in Heb. 11:20, "*By faith* Isaac blest Jacob and Esau concerning things to come."

Many are the lessons illustrated and exemplified in the above incident. We can do little more than name a few of the most important. 1. How many to-day are, like Esau, bartering Divine privileges for carnal gratification. 2. Beware of doing evil that good may come. What shame and sorrow they do make for themselves who in their zeal for good do not scruple to use wrong means. Thus it was with Rebekah and Jacob. 3. Let us seek grace to prevent natural affections overriding love for God and His revealed will. 4. Remember the unchanging law of Sowing and Reaping. How striking to observe that it was Rebekah, not Isaac, who sent her beloved child away! She it was who led him into grievous sin, and she it was whom God caused to be the instrument of his exile. She, poor thing, suggested that he find refuge in the home of Laban her brother for "some days." Little did she imagine that her favorite child would have to remain there for twenty years, and that never again should she behold him in the flesh. Ah! the mills of God grind slowly, but they grind exceeding small, and we might add "surely." And during those long years Jacob was to be *cheated* by Laban as he had cheated Isaac. 5. Learn the utter futility of seeking to foil God: "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy" (Rom. 9:16); neither Isaac's "willing" nor Esau's "running" could defeat the purpose of Jehovah. "There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the Lord that shall stand" (Prov. 19:21). Man proposes but God disposes.

Finally, have we not here, deeply hidden, a beautiful picture of the Gospel. Jacob found acceptance with his father and received his blessing because he sheltered behind the name of the father's firstborn, beloved son, and was clothed with his garments which diffused to Isaac an excellent odor. In like manner, we as sinners, find acceptance before God and receive His blessing as we shelter behind the name of *His* beloved Firstborn, and as we are clothed with the robe of righteousness which we receive from Him thus coming before the Father in the merits of His Son who "hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a *sweet smelling savor*" (Eph. 5:2).

XXIX. THE MAN JACOB: GENESIS 28

Jacob and his experiences may be viewed from two chief viewpoints: as a picture of the believer, and as a type of the Jewish nation. We shall take up the latter first. As to Jacob foreshadowing the history of the Jews we may note, among others, the following analogies:

1. Jacob was markedly the object of God's election: Rom. 9:10. So, too, was the Jewish nation. See Deut. 6:7; 10:15; Amos 3:2.

2. Jacob was loved before he was born, Rom. 9:11-13. Of the Jewish nation it is written, "Thus saith the Lord, the people which were left of the sword found grace in the wilderness; even Israel, when I went to cause him to rest, the Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love" (Jer. 31:2, 3).

3. Jacob was altogether lacking in natural attractiveness. This is singularly true of the Jewish people.

4. Jacob was the one from whom the Twelve Tribes directly sprang.

5. Jacob is the one after whom the Jewish race is most frequently called. See Isaiah 2:5, etc.

6. Jacob was the one whom God declared should be "served," Gen. 25:23; 27:29. Of the Jews the prophetic scriptures affirm, "Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will lift up Mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up My standard to the people, and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders. And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers; they shall *bow down to thee* with their face to the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet" (Is. 49:22, 23). And again it is written of Israel, "And they shall *bring* all your brethren for an offering unto the Lord out of all nations upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules" (Is. 66:20).

7. Jacob was the one to whom God gave the earthly inheritance, Gen. 27:28; 28:13. So, too, the Jews.

8. Jacob suffered a determined effort to be *robbed* of his inheritance, Gen. 27: Isaac and Esau. So have the Jews.

9. Jacob valued the blessing of God, but sought it in carnal ways, totally opposed to faith, Gen. 26:27. So it is

written of the Jews, "For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, *but not according to knowledge*. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God" (Rom. 10: 2, 3).

10. Jacob was exiled from the land as the result of his *sin*, Gen. 28: 5. So have the Jews been.

11. Jacob spent much of his life as a wandering exile from the land; such has been the history of his descendants.

12. Jacob was distinctly the *wanderer* among the patriarchs, and as such a type of the wandering Jew!

13. Jacob experienced, as such, the sore chastenings of a righteous God. So, too, the Jews.

14. Jacob had no "altar" in the land of his exile: thus also is it written of the Jews, "For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a King, and without a prince, *and without a sacrifice*" (Hosea 3: 4).

15. Jacob set his heart upon the land while exiled from it. His yearning for home is strikingly expressed in his words to Laban: "Send me away, that I may go unto mine own place, and to my country," (30: 25). How we behold the same yearning among the Zionists today, as they appeal to American and British statesmen to make it possible for them to return in safety to Palestine!

16. Jacob was unjustly dealt with in the land of exile, Gen. 29: 23; 31: 41, 42.

17. Jacob developed into a crafty schemer and used subtle devices to secure earthly riches, Gen. 30: 37, 43.

18. Jacob while in exile receives promise from God that he shall return unto the promised land, Gen. 28: 15.

19. Jacob received no further revelation from God during all the years of his exile, until at length bidden by Him to return, Gen. 31: 3.

20. Jacob was graciously preserved by God in the land of his exile and was the object of His ceaseless providential care.

21. Jacob became wealthy while in the land of exile, Gen. 30: 43.

22. Jacob, because of this, had stirred up against him the enmity of those among whom he sojourned, Gen. 31: 1.

23. Jacob ultimately returned to the land bearing with him the riches of the Gentiles, 31: 18.

24. Jacob is seen at the end *blessing* the Gentiles (Gen. 47:7), and acting as God's prophet, Gen. 49. In all these respects Jacob was a striking type of the Jew.

We shall next look at Jacob as a picture of the believer. It is intensely interesting to mark how each of the patriarchs foreshadowed some distinct truth in the believer. In Abraham we see the truth of Divine sovereignty, and the life of faith; in Isaac Divine sonship, and the life of submission; in Jacob Divine grace, and the life of conflict. In Abraham, election; in Isaac, the new birth; in Jacob, the manifestation of the two natures. Thus we find the *order* of these Old Testament biographies foreshadowed accurately what is now fully revealed in the New Testament. Again, we may remark further that, typically, Jacob is the *servant*. This is ever the Divine order. Abraham, the chosen object of God's sovereign purpose, necessarily comes first, then Isaac, the *son* born supernaturally, the heir of the father's house, followed by Jacob, the *servant*. It is needful to call special attention to this order to-day, though we cannot here enlarge upon it. Man would place sonship at the *end* of a long life of service, but God places it at the *beginning*. Man says, Serve God in order to become His son; but God says, You must first be My son in order to serve Me acceptably. The apostle Paul expressed this order when he said: "Whose I am, *and* whom I serve" (Acts 27:23). How carefully this order is guarded in our type appears further in the fact that *before* Jacob commenced his service at Padan-aram he first tarried at Bethel, which means "the House of God"—we must first enter God's household before we can serve Him! That Jacob *does*, typically, represent *service* is clear from, Hosea 12:12, where we are told, "And Jacob fled into the country of Syria, and Israel *served* for a wife, and for a wife he kept sheep." The *history* of this we get in Genesis 29 and 30. As a servant with Laban, Jacob was singularly *faithful*. Here is his own challenge, "These twenty years have I been with thee; thy ewes and thy she goats have not cast their young, and the rams of thy flock have I not eaten. That which was torn of beasts I brought not unto thee; I bare the loss of it; of my hand didst thou require it, whether stolen by day, or stolen by night. Thus I was, in the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night."

There is still another way in which this *progressive order* in the typical foreshadowings of the three great patriarchs comes out. This has been forcefully set forth by Mr. F. W. Grant who, when commenting on the words of the Lord to Moses at the burning bush—"say unto the children of Israel, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob sent me unto you"—says, "In Abraham we find manifested the type of the Father, and in Isaac admittedly that of the Son, in Jacob-Israel we find a type and pattern of the Spirit's work which is again and again dwelt on and expanded in the after-scriptures. Balaam's words as to the people, using this double—this natural and this scriptural—name, are surely as true of the nation's ancestors. 'It shall be said of Jacob, and of Israel, what hath God wrought?' What God hath *wrought* is surely what in the one now before us we are called in an especial way to acknowledge and glory in. For Jacob's God is He whom we still know as accomplishing in us by almighty power the purposes of sovereign grace."

While it is true that each of the three great patriarchs exemplified in his own person some fundamental truth of Divine revelation, yet it is to be particularly noted that each succeeding individual carried forward what had gone before, so that nothing was lost. In Abraham we behold the truth of election—God's singling of him out from all the people on the earth; yet in Isaac the *same* truth is manifested, as is evident from the passing by of Ishmael and God's declaration that "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." Isaac represents the truth of Divine sonship, born supernaturally by the intervention of God's power. Now in Jacob both of these truths, with important additions, are also to be observed. Even more notably than in the cases of Abraham and Isaac, Jacob is the object of God's sovereign choice: "Jacob gives occasion to the exercise of God's sovereignty as to the twin children of Isaac and Rebekah. 'For they being not yet born, nor having done any good or bad, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of Him that calls, it was said to their mother, the elder shall serve the younger.' It had been shown before in casting out the bond-woman and her son; but so it was now far more emphatically in Jacob chosen, not Esau. No flesh shall glory in His sight; in Jehovah certainly, as it ought to be. Is man *only to think*

and talk of his rights? Sinful man! Has God alone no rights? Is He to be a mere registrar of man's wrongs? Oh! his wrongs, not rights: this is the truth, as no believer should forget from the dawn of a vital work in his soul!" ("Jacob," by W. Kelly).

As the above truth is now so much controverted we sub-join a further quotation from the pen of one who is regarded as one of the leading orthodox teachers of our day: "In all this we see the marvel and glory of the Divine sovereignty. Why the younger son should have been chosen instead of the elder we do not know. It is, however, very striking to find the same principle exercised on several other occasions. It is pretty certain that Abraham was not the eldest son of Terah. We know that Isaac was the younger son of Abraham, and that Joseph was not the eldest son of Jacob. All this goes to emphasize the simple fact that the order of nature is not necessarily the order of grace. All through, *God decided to display the sovereignty of His grace* as contrasted with that which was merely natural in human life. The great problem of Divine sovereignty is of course insoluble by the human intellect. It has to be accepted as a simple fact. It should, however, be observed that it is not merely a fact in regard to things spiritual; it is found also in nature in connection with human temperaments and races. All history is full of illustrations of the Divine choice, as we may see from such examples as Cyrus and Pharaoh. *Divine election is a fact, whether we can understand it or not* (italics ours). God's purposes are as certain as they are often inscrutable, and it is perfectly evident from the case of Esau and Jacob that the Divine choice of men is entirely independent of their merits or of any pre-vision of their merits or attainments (Rom. 9:11). It is in connection with this subject that we see the real force of St. Paul's striking words when he speaks of God as acting 'according to the *good pleasure* of His will' (Eph. 1:5), and although we are bound to confess the '*mystery* of His will' (Eph. 1:9), we are also certain that He works all things 'after the *counsel* of His will' (Eph. 1:11—italics not ours). There is nothing arbitrary about God and His ways and our truest wisdom when we cannot understand His reasons is to rest quietly and trustfully, saying, 'Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight.' 'In His

Will is our peace' ” (Dr. Griffith-Thomas, Commentary on Genesis).

Not only is the Divine sovereignty illustrated in Jacob, as in Abraham, but we also see typified in him the truth of regeneration (as in the case of Isaac) inasmuch as *nature* was set aside, and only in answer to prayer and by Divine intervention was Rebekah enabled to bear Jacob: see Gen. 25: 21.

That which is most prominent in the Divine dealings with Jacob was the matchless *grace* of God, shown to one so unworthy, the marvellous *patience* exercised toward one so slow of heart to believe, the changeless *love* which unweariedly followed him through all his varied course, the *faithfulness* which no unfaithfulness on Jacob's part could change, and the *power* of God which effectively preserved and delivered him through numerous dangers and which, in the end, caused the spirit to triumph over the flesh, transforming the worm Jacob into Israel the prince of God. How these Divine perfections were displayed will be discovered as we turn our attention to the various scenes in which the Holy Spirit has portrayed our patriarch. We turn now to look briefly at Jacob in Genesis 28.

In our last article we dwelt upon Jacob deceiving his father, now we see how quickly he began to suffer for his wrongdoing! “And Isaac called Jacob, and blessed him, and said unto him, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan. *Arise, go to Padan-aram, to the house of Bethuel thy mother's father; and take thee a wife from thence of the daughters of Laban, thy mother's brother*” (28: 1, 2). Jacob is sent away from home, to which he returns not for many years. In our studies upon Isaac we have seen how he foreshadowed those who belong to the *heavenly* calling, whereas, as we have pointed out above, Jacob typified the people of the *earthly* calling. This comes out in many incidental details. Isaac was forbidden to leave Canaan (type of the Heavenlies)—24: 5, 6—and his bride was brought to him, but Jacob *is sent forth out of Canaan* to the house of his mother's father in quest of a wife, and thus was signified the evident contrast between Isaac and Jacob, and Jacob's *earthly* place and relationship.

“And Jacob went out from Beersheba, and went toward Haran. And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the

stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And, behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac; the land whereon thy liest to thee will I *give* it, and to thy seed; and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth; and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south; and in thee and thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of" (28:10-15). There is much here that might be dwelt upon with profit to our souls, but we can do little more than mention one or two things.

Here we behold the marvellous *grace* of God, which delights to single out as its objects the most unlikely and unworthy subjects. Here was Jacob a fugitive from his father's house, fleeing from his brother's wrath, with probably no thought of God in his mind. As we behold him there on the bare ground with nothing but the stones for his pillow, enshrouded by the darkness of night, asleep—symbol of death—we obtain a striking and true picture of *man in his natural state*. Man is never so *helpless* as when asleep, and it was while he was in *this* condition that God appeared unto him! What had Jacob done to *deserve* this high honor? What was there in him to *merit* this wondrous privilege? Nothing; absolutely nothing. It was God in *grace* which now met him for the first time and here *gave* to him and his seed the land whereon he lay. Such is ever His way. He pleases to choose the foolish and vile things of this world: He selects those who have nothing and gives them everything: He singles out those who deserve naught but judgment, and bestows on them nothing but blessing. But note—and mark it particularly—the recipient of the Divine favors must first take his place *in the dust*, as Jacob here did (on the naked earth) before God will bless him.

And under what similitude did the Lord now reveal Himself to the worm Jacob? Jacob beheld in his dream a *ladder* set up on the earth, whose top reached unto heaven, and

from above it the voice of God addressed him. Fortunately we are not left to our own speculations to determine the signification of this: John 1:51 interprets it for us. We say fortunately, for if we could not point to John 1:51 in proof of what we advance, some of our readers might charge us with indulging in a wild flight of the imagination. The "ladder" pointed to *Christ Himself*, the One who spanned the infinite gulf which separated heaven from earth, and who has in His own person provided a Way whereby we may draw near to God. That the "ladder" reached from earth to heaven, told of the *complete* provision which Divine grace has made for sinners. Right down to where the fugitive lay, the ladder came, and right up to God Himself the "ladder" reached!

In His address to Jacob, the Lord now repeated the promises which He had made before to Abraham and Isaac, with the additional assurance that He would be with him, preserving him wherever he went, and ultimately bringing him back to the land. In perfect harmony with the fact that Jacob represented the earthly people we may observe here that God declares Jacob's seed shall be "as the dust of the earth," but *no reference* is made to "the stars of heaven!"

The sequel to this vision may be told in few words. Jacob awoke and was afraid, saying, "How dreadful is this place! This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven" (v. 17). Next, he took the stone on which his head had rested and poured oil upon it. Then he changed the name of the place from Luz to Bethel. It is instructive to note this change of name, Luz—its original name, signifies "separation," while Bethel, its new name, means "the house of God." Is it not beautiful to mark the typical force of this? God calls us to *separate from the world*, but in leaving the world *we enter His house!* "Never do we part from ought at His call, but He far more than makes it up to us with His own smile" (W. Lincoln).

Finally, we are told, "And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God. And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house, and of all that Thou shalt give me *I will surely give* the tenth unto Thee" (28: 20-22). How true to life this is! It was not only character-

istic of Jacob personally, but typical of *us* representatively. *Jacob failed to rise to the level of God's grace* and was filled with fear instead of peace, and expressed human legality by speaking of what *he* will do. Oh, how often *we* follow in his steps! Instead of resting in the goodness of God and appropriating His free grace, like Jacob, we bargain and enter into conditions and stipulations. May the God of Grace enlarge our hearts to receive His grace, and may He empower us to magnify His grace by refusing to defile it with any of our own wretched additions.

XXX. JACOB AT PADAN-ARAM: GENESIS 29

In our last article we followed Jacob as he left his father's house and commenced his long journey to Padan-aram where lived Laban, his mother's brother. On his first night out from Beersheba he lit upon a certain place and making a pillar of the stones lay down to sleep. Then it was that he dreamed, and in the dream the Lord appeared unto him, probably for the first time in his life, and after promising to give him the land whereon he lay and to make his seed as numerous as the dust of the earth and a blessing to all families, he received the comforting assurance that God would be with him, would keep him in all places whither he went, and ultimately bring him back again to the land given to him and his fathers. In the morning Jacob arose, poured oil on the stone pillar, and named the place Bethel, which means "The House of God."

The effect of this experience on Jacob is briefly but graphically signified in the opening words of Genesis 29, where we read, "*Then Jacob lifted up his feet*, and came into the land of the people of the East" (marginal rendering). The heaviness with which he must have left home had now gone. Assured of the abiding presence and protection of Jehovah, he went on his way light-heartedly. It deserves to be noted that the journey which Jacob had scarcely begun the previous day was an arduous and difficult one. From Beersheba, Isaac's dwelling-place, to Padan-Aram, his destination, was a distance of something like five hundred miles, and when we remember that he was on foot and alone we can the better appreciate the blessed grace of Jehovah which met the lonely fugitive the first night, and gave him the comforting promise that He was with him and would keep him in *all* places whither he went (28:15). Little wonder, then, that now Jacob goes forth so confidently and cheerfully. As a Jewish commentator remarks, "His heart lifted up his feet." And, reader, do not we need to be reminded that *our* Lord has promised, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end"? If our hearts drew from this cheering and inspiring promise the comfort and incentive it is designed to convey should not we "lift up" *our* feet as we journey through this world? Oh! it is unbelief, failure

to rest upon the "exceeding great and precious promises" of our God, and forgetfulness that He is ever by our side, that makes our feet leaden and causes us to drag along so wearily.

The remainder of the long journey seems to have passed without further incident, for the next thing we read of is that Jacob had actually come into that land which he sought. And here we find a striking *proof* that the Lord *was* with him indeed, for he was guided to a well where he met none other than the daughter of the very man with whom he was going to make his home! It was not by chance that Jacob lit upon that well in the field, nor was it by accident that Rachel came to that well just when she did. There are no chance-happenings or accidents in a world that is governed by God. It was not by chance that the Ishmaelites passed by when the brethren of Joseph were plotting his death, nor was it an accident they were journeying down to Egypt. It was not by chance that Pharaoh's daughter went down to the river to bathe, and that one of her attendants discovered there the infant Moses in the ark of bullrushes. It was not by chance that upon a certain night, critical in the history of Israel, that Ashasuerus was unable to sleep and that he should arise and read the state-records which contained an entry of how Mordecai had foiled an attempt on the King's life, which led, in turn, to the saving of Mordecai's life. So, we say, it was not by chance that Jacob now met Rachel. No; we repeat, there cannot be any chance-happenings in a world that is governed by God, still less can there be any accidents in the lives of those He is constantly "with." My reader, there are no chance-happenings, no chance-meetings, no chance delays, no chance losses, no chance anythings in *our* lives. *All* is of Divine appointment.

But while we have called attention to God's faithfulness in guiding Jacob to the well where he met Rachel, we must not ignore Jacob's personal failure, a noticeable failure of *omission*. As he had come so near to the end of his journey and had almost arrived at his destination we would have thought, as he reached this well, that now was the time for him to very definitely commit himself into the hands of God, especially in view of the fact that he was engaged in the important and momentous undertaking of seeking a wife. Years before, when the servant of Abraham was upon

a similar mission, seeking a wife for Isaac, when *he* arrived at a well we are told that "he said, O Lord God of my master Abraham, I pray Thee, send me good speed this day" (24:12). But here in connection with Jacob we read of no prayer for Divine guidance and blessing, instead, we find him interrogating the Haran shepherds.

"And he looked, and behold a well in the field, and, lo, there were three flocks of sheep lying by it; for out of that well they watered the flocks: and a great stone was upon the well's mouth. And thither were all the flocks gathered: and they rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the sheep, and put the stone again upon the well's mouth in his place. And Jacob said unto them, My brethren, whence be ye? And they said, Of Haran are we. And he said unto them, Know ye Laban the son of Nahor? And they said, We know him. And he said unto them, Is he well? And they said, He is well: and, behold, Rachel his daughter cometh with the sheep" (29:2-6). Without doubt there is a spiritual meaning to each detail here. It cannot be without some good reason that the Spirit of God has told us this was in a *field*, that there were *three* flocks of sheep lying by it, and that there was a *great stone* upon the well's mouth. But we confess we discern not their significance, and where spiritual vision be dim it is idle, or worse, to speculate.

"Behold, Rachel his daughter cometh with the sheep." At mention of Rachel, Jacob acted in a thoroughly characteristic manner: "And he said, Lo, it is yet high day, neither is it time that the cattle should be gathered together: water ye the sheep, *and go* and feed them" (29:7). Jacob's design is evident; he sought to send the shepherds away, so that he might be alone when he met Rachel. But his design was foiled, "and while he yet spake with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep: for she kept them." And then follows a touching description of the meeting between Jacob and this young woman who was to become his wife.

"And it came to pass, when Jacob saw Rachel the daughter of Laban his mother's brother, and the sheep of Laban his mother's brother, that Jacob went near, and rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother. And Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice, and wept. And Jacob told Rachel that he

was her father's brother, and that he was Rebekah's son: and she ran and told her father" (29:10-12). These verses shed an interesting light on Jacob's natural character. Rachel's appearance awakened within him all the warmth of natural feeling. He courteously rolled away the stone, watered the sheep, kissed Rachel and burst into tears. The remembrance of home and the relationship of his *mother* to Rachel overpowered him—note the threefold reference to his mother in verse 10: "When Jacob saw Rachel the daughter of Laban *his mother's* brother, and the sheep of Laban *his mother's* brother, that Jacob went near, and rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the flock of Laban *his mother's* brother." Jacob, then, was no cold, calculating stoic, but was of a warm disposition, and everything that revived the memory of his mother went to his heart. What a lovely human touch this gives to the picture! Nothing is trivial with God.

"And it came to pass, when Laban heard the tidings of Jacob his sister's son, that he ran to meet him, and embraced him, and kissed him, and brought him to his house. And he told Laban all these things. And Laban said to him, Surely thou art my bone and my flesh. And he abode with him the space of a month" (29:13, 14). The plan of Jacob's mother seemed to be working very well. Everything appeared to be running very smoothly. Esau had been left behind at a safe distance, the long journey from Beersheba to Padan-aram had been covered without harm, little or no difficulty had been experienced in locating his mother's brother. Rachel had shown no resentment at Jacob's affectionate greeting, and now Laban himself had accorded the fugitive a warm welcome, and for a whole month nothing seems to have broken their serenity. *And what of God?* What of His moral government? What of the law of retribution? Was Jacob to suffer nothing for his wrongdoing? Was the deception he had practiced upon Isaac to escape unnoticed? Would it, in his case, *fail* to appear that "the way of the transgressor is hard"? (Pro. 13:15). Ah! be not deceived; God is not mocked. Sometimes the actions of God's government may appear to move slowly, but sooner or later they are sure. Often-times this is overlooked. Men take too short a view: "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed *speedily*, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil" (Ecc. 8:11).

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leave home and flee from Esau; how fitting then he should now be obliged *to wait seven years* before he could obtain Rachel, and that he should be made to serve a further seven years for her after they were married!

In drawing this article to a close we would seek to expand briefly what seems to us to be the outstanding principle in the scripture we have just examined, namely, the principle of Divine retribution. "Even as I have seen, they that plough iniquity, and sow wickedness, *reap the same*" (Job 4:8). In Laban's treatment of Jacob we see the deceiver deceived! This principle that whatsoever a man soweth *that shall* he also reap is writ large across the pages of Holy Scripture and is strikingly, nay marvelously, illustrated again and again. Pharaoh, King of Egypt, gave orders that every son of the Hebrews should be *drowned* (Ex. 1:22), and so in the end *he* was drowned (Ex. 14:28). Korah caused a cleft in the Congregation of Israel (Num. 16:2, 3), and so God made a cleft in the earth to swallow him (Num. 16:30). Again, we read of one Adoni-bezek that he fled, "and they pursued after him, and caught him, and cut off his thumbs and his great toes. And Adoni-bezek said, Three score and ten kings, having their thumbs and their great toes cut off, gathered their meat under my table: *as I have done, so God hath requited me!*" (Judges 1:6, 7). Wicked Ahab caused Naboth to be slain and the dogs came and licked up his blood (1 Kings 21:19), accordingly we read that when Ahab died he was buried in Samaria, "And one washed the chariot (in which he had been slain) in the pool of Samaria; and the dogs licked up *his blood*" (1 Kings 22:38). King Asa caused the prophet to be placed in "the house of *the stocks*" (2 Chron. 16:10 R. V.), and accordingly we read later that God punished *him* by a disease in his *feet* (1 Kings 15:23). Haman prepared a gallows for Mordecai, but was hanged upon it himself (Esther 7:10). Saul of Tarsus stood by and consented to the *stoning* of Stephen, and later we read that at Lystra the Jews *stoned* Paul (Acts 14:19)—this is the more noticeable because Barnabas who was with him escaped!

But the most striking example of what men term "poetic justice" is the case of Jacob himself. First, he deceived his father and was, in turn, deceived by his father-in-law: Jacob came the younger for the elder to deceive Isaac, and has the elder daughter of Laban given instead of the

younger for a wife. Second, we may mark the same principle at work in Jacob's wife. In deceiving Jacob in the matter of Leah, Laban tricked Rachel; later we find Rachel tricking Laban (31:35). Again, we note how a mercenary spirit actuated Jacob in buying the birthright from Esau for a mess of pottage; the sequel to this was the mercenary spirit in Laban which caused him to change Jacob's wages ten times (see 31:41). Finally we may remark, what is most striking of all, that Jacob deceived Isaac by allowing his mother to cover his hands and neck with "the skins of *the kids of the goats*" (27:16), and later Jacob's sons deceived him by dipping the coat of Joseph in the blood of "a *kid of the goats*" (37:31) and making him believe an evil beast had devoured him: note, too, that Jacob deceived Isaac in regard to his favorite son (Esau), and so was Jacob deceived in regard to *his* favorite son (Joseph).

While it is true that very often *the connection between* evil-doing and its evil consequences is not so apparent as in the above examples, nevertheless, God has given us, and still gives us, sufficient proof so as to provide us with solemn warnings of the fact that He is *not mocked*, that He *does* observe the ways of men, that He *hates* sin wherever it is found, and that His righteous government requires that "every transgression and disobedience" shall receive "a just recompense of reward" (Heb. 2:2). This "just recompense of reward" is visited upon His own children here in this world, not sent in anger but in love, not in judgment but directed to the conscience and heart so as to bring them to judge themselves for their evil doing. With the wicked it is often otherwise. Frequently they flourish here as a green bay tree, but at the Great White Throne the books shall be opened and every one of them shall be "judged *according to their works*."

Should one who is out of Christ, a lost sinner, have read this article, let it be unto him as a voice crying "Flee from the wrath to come;" flee to the Lord Jesus, the Saviour, the only Refuge, who came into this world to save sinners. And, let the Christian reader learn anew the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and earnestly seek grace to enable him to crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts so that he may "sow to the Spirit," then shall he "of the Spirit reap life everlasting."

XXXI. JACOB AT PADAN-ARAM: GENESIS 29, 30

Jacob's stay at Padan-Aram was a lengthy one, much longer than he imagined when he first went there, so little do any of us know what the immediate future holds for us. We move to some place expecting to settle there, and lo, in a short time, God calls us to strike our tents and move to another region. Or, we go to a place thinking it is only for a transient visit, but remain there many years. So it was with Jacob. How blessed to remember, "My times are in *Thy* hand" (Ps. 31: 15).

A somewhat lengthy account is given describing Jacob's sojourn in Laban's home. It is not our aim to expound in detail this section of Genesis—abler pens have done that; rather shall we proffer a few general remarks upon some of the outstanding features which are of special interest and importance.

The thirtieth chapter of Genesis is not pleasant reading, yet is it, like every other in the Old Testament, recorded for our learning. No reflecting Christian mind can read through this chapter without being disgusted with the fruitage and consequences of *polygamy* as therein described. The domestic discords, the envies and jealousies between Jacob's several wives, forcibly illustrate and demonstrate the wisdom and goodness of God's law that each man should have his own wife, as well as each woman her own husband. Example is better than precept, and in Gen. 30 the Holy Spirit sets before us an example of what a plurality of wives must necessarily result in—discord, jealousy and hatred. Let us thank God, then, for giving to us His written precepts to regulate the marriage relationship, the observance of which is necessary not only for the protection of the purity of the home but for its peace and happiness as well.

Though the strifes and jealousies of Jacob's wives were indeed distressing and disgusting yet, we must not attribute their desire for children, or the devices they resorted to in order to obtain them, to mere carnal motives. Had there been nothing more than this the Holy Spirit would not have condescended to record them. There can be little doubt that the daughters of Laban were influenced by the

promises of God to Abraham, on whose posterity were entailed the richest blessings, and from whom the Messiah Himself, in the fullness of time, was to descend. It was faith in these promises which made every pious woman of those times desirous of being a mother, and that explains why we read so often of Hebrew women praying so earnestly for this honor.

In the previous article we dwelt at some length on the law of retribution as it was exemplified in the history of Jacob. In an unmistakable and striking manner it is shown again and again in the inspired narrative how that he reaped just what he had sown. Yet it must be borne in mind that in dealing retributively with Jacob God was not acting in wrath but in love, holy love it is true, for Divine love is never exercised at the expense of holiness. Thus, in this evident retribution God was speaking to our Patriarch's conscience and heart. A further illustration of the righteousness of God's governmental dealings is here seen, in that, now Jacob had obtained Laban's first-born daughter his desire was thwarted—she was barren. As another has remarked, "God would have His servant Jacob learn more deeply in his own wounded affections the vileness of self-seeking deceit, and hence He permitted what He would use for chastening and good in the end." (W. K.)

That which occupies the most prominent place in the passage we are now considering is the account there given of the birth and naming of Jacob's twelve sons by his different wives. Here the record is quite full and explicit. Not only is the name of each child given, but in every instance we are told the meaning of the name and that *which occasioned* the selection of it. This would lead us to conclude there is some important lesson or lessons to be learned here. This chapter traces the stream back to its source and shows us the beginnings of the twelve Patriarchs from which the twelve-tribed Nation sprang. Then, would not this cause us to suspect that the *meaning* of the names of these twelve Patriarchs and that which *occasioned* the selection of each name, here so carefully preserved, must be closely connected with the early history of the Hebrew Nation? Our suspicion becomes a certainty when we note the *order* in which the twelve Patriarchs were born, for the circumstances which gave rise to their several names correspond

exactly with *the order* of the history of the Children of Israel.

Others before us have written much upon the twelve Patriarchs, the typical significance of their names, and the order in which they are mentioned. It has been pointed out how that the Gospel and the history of a sinner saved by grace is here found in veiled form. For example: Reuben, Jacob's first-born, means, *See, a Son!* This is just what God says to us through the Gospel: to the Son of His love we are invited to look—"Behold the lamb of God." Then comes Simeon whose name signifies *Hearing* and this points to the reception of the Gospel by faith, for faith cometh by hearing, and the promise is, "Hear, and your soul shall live." Next in order is Levi, and his name means *Joined*, telling of the blessed *Union* by which the Holy Spirit makes us one with the Son through the hearing of the Word. In Judah, which means *Praise*, we have manifested the Divine life in the believer, expressed in joyous gratitude for the riches of grace which are now his in Christ. Dan means *Judgment*, and this tells of how the believer uncompromisingly passes sentence upon himself, not only for what he has done but because of what he is, and thus he reckons himself to have died unto sin. Naphtali means *Wrestling* and speaks of that earnestness in prayer which is the very breath of the new life. Next is Gad which means *a Troop or Company*, speaking, perhaps of the believer in fellowship with the Lord's people, and Jacob's eighth son announces the effect of Christian fellowship, for Asher means *Happy*. Issachar means *Hire*, and speaks of *service*, and Zebulon which signifies *Dwelling* reminds us that we are to "occupy" till Christ comes; while Joseph which means *Adding* tells of the *reward* which He will bestow on those who have served diligently and occupied faithfully. Benjamin, the last of Jacob's sons, means *Son of my right hand*, again speaking directly of Christ, and so the circle ends where it begins—with our blessed Lord, for He is "The First and the Last."

There is, then, a typical significance behind the meaning of the names of Jacob's twelve sons, and we believe there is also a prophetic significance behind the carefully preserved record of the words used by the mothers upon the naming of their sons, a significance which must be apparent to all, once it is pointed out. In view of the fact that the Hebrew

nation became known as the children of Israel, it is to be expected that we should look closely at the children of Jacob, from whom the nation took its name. And further, in view of the fact that Gen. 29, 30 records the *early* history of Jacob's twelve sons, we should expect to find their history in some way corresponds with the *early* history of the Nation descended from them. Such is indeed the case, as we shall now endeavor to set before the reader.

What we have written above in connection with the typical significance of the names of Jacob's twelve sons is no doubt, with perhaps slight variations, well known to our readers. But it is to be noted that in addition to the naming of the twelve Patriarchs, Gen. 29 and 30 records the *circumstances* which gave rise to the selection of their respective names, for in each case a *reason* is given *why* they received the names they did, yet, so far as we are aware, little or no attention at all has been paid to this feature. We are fully satisfied, however, that the words uttered by the respective mothers of these twelve sons on the occasion of their births, is not without some special significance, and it behooves us to enquire prayerfully into the Spirit's purpose in so carefully preserving a record of them.

Jacob's first son was born to him by Leah, and was named Reuben, and upon giving her son this name she said, "Surely the Lord hath *looked* upon my *affliction*" (Gen. 29:32). The second son was also borne by Leah and was named Simeon, and her reason for thus naming him was as follows, "Because the Lord hath *heard* that I was hated" (Gen. 29:33). The striking resemblance between these two utterances and what is recorded in Exodus in connection with the sufferings of Israel in Egypt is at once apparent. First, we read that "God *looked* upon the Children of Israel" (Ex. 2:25). Then, unto Moses He said, "I have surely seen the *affliction* of My people which are in Egypt" (Ex. 3:7). Then, corresponding with the words of Leah when Simeon was born, He adds, "And have *heard* their cry" (Ex. 3:7). It is surely something more than a mere coincidence that at the birth of Israel's *first* two sons their mother should have spoken of "affliction," which she said the Lord hath "looked upon" and "heard," and that these identical words should be found in the passage which describes the *first* stage in the national history of the Children of Israel who were then "hated" and "afflicted" by the

cruel Egyptians. When the Lord told Moses He had seen the "affliction" of His people Israel and had "heard" their cry, did He not have in mind the very words which Leah had uttered long years before!

Jacob's third son was named Levi, and at his birth his mother said, "This time will my *husband* be *joined* to me" (Gen. 29:34). Again these words of the mother point us forward to the beginning of Israel's national history. When was it that Jehovah was "joined" to Israel, and became her "husband"? It was on the eve of their leaving Egypt on the night of the Passover when the lamb was slain and its blood shed and sprinkled. Then it was Jehovah was "joined" to His people—just as now God is joined to us and becomes one with us only in Christ: it is in the Lamb slain, now glorified, that God and the believing sinner meet. And then it was that Jehovah entered into covenant relationship with the chosen Nation, and became their "Husband." Note how this very word is used in Jeremiah, and mark how this reference points back to the Passover night: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the House of Israel, and with the House of Judah: Not according to the covenant I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of *Egypt*; which My covenant they brake, although I was an *Husband* unto them, saith the Lord" (Jer. 31:31, 32).

Jacob's fourth son was Judah, and upon his birth the mother said, "Now will I *praise* the Lord" (Gen. 29:35). As Leah's words at Levi's birth point us back to the Passover, so her words at Judah's birth carry us forward to the crossing of the Red Sea, where Israel celebrated Jehovah's victory over their foes in song and praised the Lord for their wondrous deliverance. Then it was that, for the first time, Israel sang: "Who is like unto Thee, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like Thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in *praises*, doing wonders?" (Ex. 15:11.) Mark, too, that the Psalmist when referring back to this momentous event said, "And the waters covered their enemies: there was not one of them left. Then believed they His words: they sang His *praise*" (Psa. 106:11, 12).

Next comes Dan, and upon his birth Rachel said, "God hath *judged* me" (Gen. 30:6). If the line of interpretation and application we are now working out be cor-

rect, then these words of Rachel, following those of Leah at the birth of Judah, which as we have seen carry us, prophetically, to the Red Sea, will bear upon the early experiences of Israel in their Wilderness wanderings. Such, indeed, we believe to be the case. Do not the above words of Rachel, "God hath *judged* me," point us to the displeasure and "wrath" of God against Israel when, in response to their "murmuring" He sent the "quails," and when again they provoked His wrath at the waters of Massah and Merribah?

At the birth of Jacob's sixth son Rachel exclaimed, "With great *wrestlings* have I wrestled with my sister, and I have *prevailed*" (Gen. 30:8). How strikingly this corresponds with Israel's history! The very next thing we read of after that God "judged" Israel for their sin at Merribah was their conflict or "wrestling" with Amalek, and again be it particularly noted that the self-same word used by Rachel at the birth of Napthali is used in describing the "wrestling" between Israel and Amalek, for in Ex. 17:11 we read, "And it came to pass, when *Moses* held up his hand, that Israel *prevailed*: and when he let down his hand, Amalek *prevailed*." Surely it is something more than mere coincidence that the very word used by the mother of Napthali should occur twice in the verse which records that in Israel's history which her words prophetically anticipated; the more so, that it agrees so accurately with *the order* of events in Israel's history.

The utterances of the mother of the seventh and eighth sons of Jacob may be coupled together, as may also those connected with the birth of his ninth and tenth sons. At the birth of Gad it was said, "*A troop cometh*" (Gen. 30:11), which perfectly agrees with the order of Israel's history, for after the Wilderness had been left behind and the Jordan crossed, a "troop" indeed "came" to meet Israel, the seven nations of the Canaanites seeking to oppose their occupation of the promised land. The words of the mother of Asher, the next son, "*Happy am I*" (Gen. 30:13), tell of Israel's joy following the overthrow of their foes. Then, the words of Leah at the birth of Jacob's ninth and tenth sons, namely "God, hath given me my hire" (Gen. 30:18), and "God hath endued me with a good dowry" (Gen. 30:20), tell of Israel's *occupation* of the goodly inheritance with which Jehovah had "endowed" them. Then, just as

there was a break or interval before the last two sons were born, and just as these two *completed* Jacob's family, and *realized* his long cherished desire, inasmuch as *they* were born to him by his beloved Rachel, so her words, "The Lord shall add to me another son" (Gen. 30:24), and "The son of my sorrow" changed by the father to "Son of my right hand" (Gen. 35:18), would point to the *completion* of Israel's history as an *undivided* nation and the *realization* of their long cherished desire, in the giving to them a King, even David, to whom was "added" only one "other," namely, Solomon; and the *double* sentence uttered at Benjamin's birth was surely appropriate as a prophetic intimation of Solomon's course—so bright, yet so dark—for while in his reign the Kingdom attained its highest dignity and glory (the position signified by the "right hand"), yet, nevertheless, from the time of Solomon's coronation began Israel's *sorrowful* decline and apostasy.

Thus we have sought to show how the utterances of the mothers of Jacob's twelve sons were so many prophetic intimations of the course of the history of the Nation which descended from them, and that the *order* of the sayings of these mothers corresponds with the *order* of Israel's history, outlining that history from its beginning in Egypt until the end of the undivided Kingdom in the days of Solomon, for it was *then* the history of Israel as a nation terminated, the ten tribes going into captivity, from which they have never returned, almost immediately after.

To complete the study of this hidden but wonderful prophecy, particular attention should be paid to the way in which Jacob's sons were *grouped* under their different mothers, for this also corresponds exactly with the *grouping* of the outstanding events in Israel's history. The first four sons were *all borne* by Leah, and her utterances all pointed forward to *one group* of incidents, namely, Israel's deliverance from Egypt and the Egyptians. The fifth and sixth sons were borne by a different mother, namely, Bilhah, and her utterances pointed to a *distinct* series of events in Israel's history, namely, to their experiences in the Wilderness. The seventh and eighth sons were borne by Zilpah, and the ninth and tenth by Leah, and their utterances, closely connected yet distinct, pointed, prophetically, to Israel's occupation and enjoyment of Canaan. The eleventh and twelfth sons were *separated* from

all the others, being borne by Rachael, and so also that to which her words at their births pointed forward to, was also clearly *separated* from the early events of Israel's history, carrying us on to the establishment of the Kingdom in the days of David and Solomon.

In drawing this article to a close, one or two reflections upon the ground we have covered will, perhaps, be in place:

First, What a striking proof of the Divine inspiration of Scripture is here furnished! Probably no uninspired writer would have taken the trouble to inform us of the words used by those mothers in the naming of their boys—where can be found in all the volumes of secular history one that records *the reason why* the parent gave a certain name to his or her child? But there *was* a good and sufficient reason why the words of Jacob's wives *should be* preserved—unknown to themselves their lips were guided by God, and the Holy Spirit has recorded their utterances because they carried with them a hidden, but real, prophetic significance; and in that recording of them, and their perfect agreement with the outstanding events in the history of Israel, in which, though centuries afterward, these prophetic utterances received such striking fulfillment, we have an unmistakable proof of the Divine inspiration of the Scriptures.

Second, What an object lesson is there here for us that nothing in Scripture is trivial or meaningless! It is to be feared that many of us dishonor God's Word by the unworthy thoughts which we entertain about it. We are free to acknowledge that much in the Bible is sublime and Divine, yet there is not a little in it in which we can see no beauty or value. But that is due to the dimness of our vision and not in anywise to any imperfection in the Word. "*All Scripture*" is given by inspiration of God, the proper nouns as much as the common nouns, the genealogical lists equally as much as the lovely lyrics of the Psalmist. Who would have thought that there was anything of significance in *the meaning* of the names of Jacob's sons? Who would have supposed that it was of first importance that we should note *the order* in which they were born? Who would have imagined there was a wondrous prophecy beneath the words used by the mothers on *the occasion* of them naming their sons? Who? Each and all of us *ought* to have done so. Once we settle it for good and

all that there is nothing in the Bible which is trivial and meaningless, once we are assured that *everything* in Scripture, each word, has a significance and value, then we shall prayerfully ponder every section, and *expect* to find "hid treasures" (Prov. 2:4) in every list of names, and according unto our faith so it will be unto us.

Third, What a remarkable illustration and demonstration of the absolute Sovereignty of God is found here in Genesis 29 and 30! What a proof that God *does* rule and overrule! What a showing forth of the fact that even in our smallest actions we are controlled by the Most High! All unconsciously to themselves, these wives of Jacob in naming their babies and in stating the reasons for these names, were outlining the Gospel of God's Grace and were prophetically foreshadowing the early history of the Nation which descended from their sons. If then these women, in the naming of their sons and in the utterances which fell from their lips at that time were unknown to themselves, *guided by God*, then, verily, God is *Sovereign* indeed. And so affirms His Word, *for OF HIM*, and through Him, and to Him, *are all things.*" (Rom. 11:36.)

XXXII. JACOB'S DEPARTURE FROM HARAN: GENESIS 31

Before Jacob had ever set foot in Padan-Aram Jehovah, the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac, had said to him, "Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of." (Gen. 28:15.) And now the time had drawn near when our patriarch was to return to the promised land. He was not to spend the remainder of his days in his uncle's household; God had a different purpose than that for him, and all things were made to work together for the furtherance of that purpose. But not until God's hour was ripe must Jacob leave Padan-Aram. Some little while before *God's* time *had* come, Jacob assayed to leave: "And it came to pass, when Rachel had borne Joseph, that Jacob said unto Laban, *send me away*, that I may go unto mine own place, and to my country." (30:25.) Apparently Laban was reluctant to grant this request, and so offered to raise his wages as an inducement for Jacob to remain with him, "And Laban said unto him, I pray thee, if I have found favor in thine eyes, tarry: for I have learned by experience that the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake. And he said, Appoint me thy wages, and I will give it." (30:20, 28.) Ere proceeding with the narrative the above words of Laban deserve to be noticed. This was a remarkable confession of Jacob's uncle—"The Lord hath blessed me *for thy sake*." Laban was not blessed for his own sake, nor on account of any good deeds *he* had done; but he was blessed "for the sake" of another. Was not God here setting forth under a figure the method or principle by which He was going to bless sinners, namely, for the sake of another who was dear to Him? Do not these words of Laban anticipate the Gospel? and point forward to the present time when we read "God *for Christ's sake* hath forgiven you" (Eph. 4:32), and again in 1 John 2:12 "your sins are forgiven you *for His name's sake*." Yes, this is the blessed truth foreshadowed in Gen. 30:27: God blessed Laban for Jacob's sake. So again we read in Gen. 39:15 concerning Potiphar, "The Lord blessed the Egypt-

tian's house *for Joseph's sake.*" And again we have another beautiful illustration of this same precious fact and truth in 2 Sam. 9:1: "And David said, Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness *for Jonathan's sake.*" Reader, have *you* apprehended this saving truth? *That for which we are accepted and saved by God* is, not any work of righteousness which we have done, nor even for our believing—necessary though that be—but simply and solely *for Christ's sake.*

The sequel would seem to show that Jacob accepted Laban's offer, and decided to prolong his stay. Instead, however, of leaving himself at the mercy of his grasping and deceitful uncle, who had already "changed his wages ten times" (see Gen. 31:7), Jacob determined to outwit the one whom he had now served for upwards of twenty years by suggesting a plan which left him master of the situation, and promised to greatly enrich him. (See Gen. 30:31-42.) Much has been written concerning this device of Jacob to get the better of Laban and at the same time secure for himself that which he had really earned, and varied have been the opinions expressed. One thing seems clear: unless *God* had prospered it Jacob's plan had failed, for something more than sticks from which a part of the bark had been removed was needed to make the cattle bear "ringstreaked, speckled, and spotted" young ones. (Gen. 30:39.)

The outcome of Jacob's device is stated in the last verse of Gen. 30: "And the man increased exceedingly, and had much cattle, and maidservants, and menservants, and camels, and asses." This intimates that some little time must have elapsed since our patriarch suggested (30: 25) leaving his uncle. Now that prosperity smiled upon him Jacob was, apparently, well satisfied to remain where he was, for though Laban was no longer as friendly as hitherto, and though Laban's sons were openly jealous of him (31: 1, 2) we hear no more about Jacob being anxious to depart. But, as we have said, God's time for him to leave had almost arrived; and so we read, "And the Lord said unto Jacob, *Return* unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred; and I will be with thee." (31: 3.)

God timed this word to Jacob most graciously. The opening verses of Gen. 31 show there was not a little envy and evil-mindedness at work in the family against him. Not

only were Laban's sons murmuring at Jacob's prosperity, but their father was plainly of the same mind and bore an unkindly demeanor toward his nephew—"And Jacob beheld the countenance of Laban, and behold, it was not toward him as before." The Lord had promised to be with Jacob, and to keep him in all places whither he went, and he now makes good His word. Like a watchful friend at hand, He observes his treatment and bids him depart. As another has well said, "If Jacob had removed from mere personal resentment, or as stimulated only by a sense of injury, he might have sinned against God, though not against Laban. But when it was said to him 'Return unto the land of thy fathers and to thy kindred, and I will be with thee,' his way was plain before him. In all our removals, it becomes us to act as that we may hope for the Divine presence and blessing to attend us; else, though we may flee from one trouble, we shall fall into many, and be less able to endure them." (Andrew Fuller.)

"And the Lord said unto Jacob, Return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred; and I will be with thee." (31: 3.) What a showing forth of God's wondrous grace was this! In all that is told us about Jacob during the twenty years he spent at Padan-Aram there was not a word which intimates he had any dealings with God during that time. There is no mention of any "altar," no reference to prayer, nothing to distinguish him from a thorough worldling. It needs to be remembered that the "altar" speaks not only of sacrifice but of *communion* too. The altar pointed forward to Christ, and it is only in Him that God and the redeemed sinner meet and commune together. Jacob, then, had no altar in Padan-Aram because he was out of communion with Jehovah. "Although God in His faithfulness be with us, we are not always with Him." (J. N. D.) But if Jacob had forgotten the Lord, Jehovah had not forgotten him; and now that Jacob begins to be in real need the Lord spoke the suited word. Yet mark the other side.

Having been warned of God to depart, Jacob sends for his wives into the field, where he might converse with them freely on the subject, without danger of being overheard. (See 31: 4-13.) The reasons he names for leaving were partly the treatment of Laban, and partly the intimations of God—"I see your father's *countenance* that it is not

toward me as before." Mr. Fuller's practical observations on these words are so good we cannot refrain from quoting them: "It is wisely ordered that the countenance should, in most cases, be an index to the heart; else there would be much more deception in the world than there is. We gather more of men's disposition toward us from their looks than their words; and domestic happiness is more influenced by the one than by the other. Sullen silence is often more intolerable than contention itself, because the latter, painful as it is, affords opportunity for mutual explanation. But while Jacob had to complain at Laban's cloudy countenance he could add, 'The God of my father hath been with me.' God's smiles are the best support under man's frowns; if we walk in the light of His countenance we need not fear what man can do unto us."

Having talked the matter over with his wives, and obtained their consent to accompany him, the next thing was to prepare for their departure. Had Laban known what was in his nephew's mind there is reason to fear he would have objected, perhaps have used force to detain him, or at least deprived him of the greater part of his possessions. Acting with his usual caution, Jacob waited until Laban was a three days' journey away from home, absent at a sheep-shearing. Taking advantage of this, Jacob, accompanied by his wives, his children, and his flocks, "stole away un-awares to Laban." (31: 20.) How little there was of Divine guidance and of faith in Jehovah in this stealth! Not of him could it be said "For ye shall not go out with haste, nor by flight; for the Lord will go before you; and the God of Israel will be your rearward." (Isa. 52: 12.) That the Holy Spirit was *not* here leading is made still more evident by what is told us in verse 19: "And Rachel had stolen the teraphim that were her father's." It may be of interest to some of our readers if we here digress again and contemplate these teraphim in the light of other scriptures.

Scholars tell us that the word "teraphim" may be traced to a Syrian root which means "to enquire."* This explains the reason *why* Rachel took with her these family "gods" when her husband stole away surreptitiously from her home—it was to *prevent* her father from "enquiring" of these idol "oracles" and thus discovering the direction in which they had gone. Mark that Laban calls these teraphim his

*Probably the name "teraphim" was originally a corruption of cherubim.

“gods.” (31: 30.) The next reference to the “teraphim” in Scripture confirms the idea that they were used for oracular consultation. In Judges xvii: 5 we read: “And the man Micah had a house of gods, and made an ephod, and teraphim, and consecrated one of his sons who became his priest”; next we are told “In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes” and “Micah consecrated the Levite; and the young man became his priest, and was in the house of Micah.” (Verse 6, 12.) Then, in the chapter that follows, we read of the tribe of Dan seeking an inheritance to dwell in, and sending out spies to search out the land; and they came to “the house of Micah (who had the teraphim) and said to his priest, *Ask counsel*, we pray thee, of God, that we may know whether our way which we go shall be prosperous.” (Judges 18: 6.) That it was of the “teraphim” they wished him to enquire, and not of the Lord, is clear from what follows, for when the spies returned to their tribe and made their report (which was adopted), the tribe on going forth to secure their inheritance carefully saw to it that Micah’s “priest” with his “graven image, and the ephod, and the teraphim” accompanied them, so that we are told he became their “priest.” (See 18: 8-20.) Next we read in 1 Sam. 19: 13: “And Michal took a teraphim and laid it in the bed, and put a pillow of goat’s hair for his bolster, and covered it with a cloth.” This scripture not only reveals the sad fact that Saul’s daughter was an idolator and practiced necromancy, but also intimates that by this time the “teraphim” were *fashioned after the human form*—hence Michal’s selection of one of these to appear like the figure of her sleeping husband.* Ezek. 21: 21 also makes it clear that the “teraphim” were used for oracular consultation—“The king of Babylon . . . consulted with teraphim.” Later scriptures indicate that after Israel had apostatized from Jehovah they turned to the “teraphim” more and more—“For the teraphim have spoken vanity, and the diviners have seen a lie, and have told false dreams; they comfort in vain.” (Zech. 10: 2.) Hence it was in pronouncing sentence on recreant Israel, God said: “For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and *without a*

*This one must have been much larger than those which Rachael concealed under her saddle.

teraphim.” What a terrible analogy to all this we behold in our own day! Just as in olden time Israel turned from Jehovah to the “*teraphim*” of the heathen, so today, now that Christendom has apostatized, men on all sides are turning away from the Holy Scriptures which are the Oracles of God, and are giving heed to seducing spirits and the deceptions of Satan.

That Laban harbored in his home these “*teraphim*” shows that the idolatry of Babylonia still clung to his family, notwithstanding he had some knowledge of the true God. (See 31: 53.) Laban appears to have been a man much after the order of those of whom it is written: “They swear by the Lord and by Malchom” (a heathen god). (Zeph. 1: 5.) This strange contradiction in Laban’s religious life appears to throw light upon a passage and person that has long puzzled Bible students. We refer to Balaam. This mysterious prophet seems to have been a heathen soothsayer, and yet it is evident he also had some dealings with Jehovah. If Balaam was a descendant of Laban this would account for this religious anomaly. Now in Num. 23: 7 we learn that Balaam came from “*Aram*,” which may possibly be identical with Padan-Aram where Laban dwelt. Balaam prophesied only some 280 years after Jacob’s departure from Laban’s home, and may then have been an old man, at any rate in those days 280 years covered only about two generations. The Targum of Jonathan on Num. 27: 5, and the Targum on 1 Chron. 1: 44 make Balaam to be Laban himself; and others say he was the son of Beor, the son of Laban. Bearing in mind that Laban employed the “*teraphim*” as his “*gods*,” if Balaam were one of his descendants then it would explain why he did not utterly disown Jehovah while yet practicing the abominations of the heathen.

To return to the narrative. It was not long after Jacob’s stealthy departure that Laban heard of what had taken place, and gathering together what was, no doubt, a considerable force, he immediately set out in pursuit. But on the night before he overtook Jacob’s party, God appeared to him in a dream, and warned him against even speaking to Jacob “*good or bad*.” Thus did Jehovah, once again, make good His original promise to our patriarch and manifest His preserving Presence with Jacob. The measure in which Laban respected the word of God is seen in the

charges he brought against Jacob when they met the next day. We refrain from commenting on the lengthy colloquy between Jacob and his uncle. Though considerable feeling was evidenced by both parties, the interview terminated happily, and the final leave-taking was quite affecting. But it is remarkable that at the close of their interview each man revealed himself and his true condition of heart. It is by the seemingly little things that our characters are shown—"By thy *words* thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." (Matt. 12: 37.) So it was here. When Jacob took a stone and "set it up for a pillar" to be a witness of the covenant made between them (21: 44-46) *Laban* called it "Jegar-sahadutha" which is *Chaldean* for "heap of witness," thus speaking in the language of *heathendom*; whereas, Jacob termed it "Galeed" which was *Hebrew* for "heap of witness." Only the true believer can speak the language of God's people; of the worldling, the godless idolator, it must be said of him as the maid said of Peter when he was *denying* his Lord, "Thy *speech* betrayeth thee." (Matt. 26: 73.)

The closing verses of our chapter present briefly another beautiful typical picture: "Then Jacob offered sacrifice upon the mount, and called his brethern to eat bread; and they did eat bread, and tarried all night in the mount. And early in the morning Laban rose up, and kissed his sons and his daughters, and blessed them; and Laban departed and returned unto his place." First a covenant of peace was proposed, then it was ratified by a sacrifice, and last it was commemorated by a feast. So it was in Egypt. God made promise to Moses, then the lamb was slain, and then the people feasted upon his roasted flesh. Thus it is with us. God entered into a covenant of peace before the foundation of the world, in the fullness of time the great Sacrifice was offered and accepted, and this is now commemorated at the "feast" of the Lord's Supper. (I Cor. v: 8.) Note, too, it was not Laban the elder, but Jacob his nephew who "offered sacrifice upon the mount."

One practical observation on the circumstance of Jacob leaving Padan-Aram and we conclude. It has been suggested by Dr. Griffith-Thomas that this incident supplies us with valuable principles for regulating the believer in his daily life when in doubt concerning the will of God. How often one is puzzled to know whether God would have

us take a certain course or not. How may I be sure of God's will concerning some issue which confronts me? An important question; one that is frequently met with, and one which must find answer in the Word alone. Surely God has not left us without something definite for our guidance. Not that we must always look for a passage of Scripture whose terms are absolutely identical with our own situation, but rather must we search for some passage which sets forth some clearly defined *principles* which are suited to meet our case. Such indeed we find here in Gen. 31.

Jacob was in a strange land. He had been there for twenty years, yet he knew he was not to spend the remainder of his days there. God had assured him he should return to Canaan. How much longer then was he to tarry at Padan-Aram? When was he to start out for his old home? How could he be sure when *God's time* for him to move had arrived? Pressing questions these. Note how the answer to them is found here in three things: first, a definite *desire* sprang up in Jacob's heart to return home—this is evident from Gen. 30: 25. But this in itself was not sufficient to warrant a move, so Jacob must wait a while longer. Second, *circumstances* became such that a move seemed the wise thing; the jealousy of Laban and his sons made his continued stay there intolerable. (Gen. 31: 1, 2.) This was ordered of God who makes all things "work together" for the good of His own people. But still something more was needed ere Jacob was justified in leaving. So, in the third place, there was a clear *word from God*—"The Lord said unto Jacob, Return unto the land of thy fathers." (Gen. 31: 3.)

It is not always that God gives us a manifestation of these three principles, but whenever they *do* combine and are evident we may be sure of His will in any given circumstance. First, a definite conviction in our hearts that God desires us to take a certain course or do a certain thing. Second, the path He would have us take being indicated by outward circumstances, which make it (humanly) possible or expedient we should do it. Then, third, after definitely waiting on God for it, some special word from the Scriptures which is suited to our case and which by the Spirit bringing it manifestly to our notice (while waiting for guidance) is plainly a message from God to our individual heart. Thus may we be assured of God's will *for us*. The most important

thing is to *wait on God*. Tell Him your perplexity, ask Him to prevent you from making any mistake, cry earnestly to Him to make “plain His way before your face” (Psa. 5: 8), and then “wait patiently” till He does so. Remember that “whatsoever is not of faith is sin.” (Rom. 4: 23.) If you are sincere and patient, and pray in faith, then, in His own good time and way, He will most certainly answer, either by removing the conviction or desire from your heart, and arranging your circumstances in such a manner that your way is blocked—and then you will know *His time* for you to move has not arrived—or, by deepening your conviction, so ordering your circumstances as that the way is opened up *without your doing anything yourself*, and by speaking definitely through His written Word. “Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass. (Psa. 37: 5.) The *meek* will He guide in judgment; and the *meek* will He teach His way.” (Psa. 25: 9.) “He that believeth shall not make haste.” May writer and reader be permitted by Divine grace to enjoy that blessed peace that comes from knowing we are in the will—that “good and perfect and acceptable will”—of God.

XXXIII. JACOB AT MAHANAIM: GENESIS 32

In our last article we contemplated Jacob, in obedience to the word of the Lord who bade him "return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred, and I will be with thee" (Gen. 31: 3), as then leaving Padan-Aram and starting out for Canaan. We also paid some attention to Laban's pursuit of our patriarch, and of the affectionate leave-taking which eventually ensued. Here we are to consider another important incident which befell Jacob by the way.

"And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him." (Gen. 32:1.) Jacob was now in the path of obedience and therefore God favored him with another revelation to strengthen his faith and inspire him with courage for what lay before him—the meeting with Esau and his four hundred men. While in the path of obedience we must expect to encounter that which will test our faith, and not the least of such trials will be that to all outward appearances God Himself is against us; yet as we *start out* along any path He has appointed, God in His grace, usually encourages us with a plain revelation from Himself, a token of His approval, a strengthener to faith; and at *the end* we find the path of the just is as the shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. So it proved with Jacob.

"And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him." The word "met" here suggests a beautiful thought. It is not that the angels "appeared" to him, but they "met" him. Jacob is returning from his long exile, returning to the land given to his fathers (and later to himself) by Jehovah. These angels then came forward to greet him, as it were. God sent these messengers of His in advance to *welcome* his servant home, and to express to him His goodwill. On his journey out from Canaan to Padan-Aram the Lord Himself met Jacob and gave him a vision of the angels; and here, now that he is on his way back from Padan-Aram to Canaan, the angels met him, followed immediately afterwards by the Lord appearing to him.

"And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him. And when Jacob saw them, he said, This is God's host; and he called the name of that place Mahanaim."

(Gen. 32:1, 2.) Once again we note how *timely* are God's interventions. Jacob had just escaped from one company of his enemies (Laban and his brethren—Gen. 31: 22, 23), and another was now advancing to meet him, namely, Esau with his four hundred men. But at this juncture God's host made its appearance, as though to show him to whom he owed his recent escape, and as if to further assure him that He who *had* delivered, *did* deliver, and he might safely trust *would* deliver him. It is to be remarked that the angels (32: 1) which appeared on this occasion were termed by Jacob "God's host" in the singular number, but from the name which Jacob gave to the place—Mahanaim—it is evident they were divided into two companies, for Mahanaim signifies *two hosts*. It would seem, then, there was one host of these "angels" of God, but divided into two companies, probably encompassing him both before and behind. Was not this God's provision for the two hosts of Jacob's adversaries, which at the same time, and no doubt with the same violent designs, were coming against him! The one had already been sent back without striking a blow (Laban and his company), and the other should yet also be. While this was not expressly revealed to Jacob, nevertheless, this host of angels before him, as well as the one behind, was most evidently a comforting assurance from God that He was with His child and would preserve him whithersoever he went. How it reminds us of the experience of the Children of Israel in the wilderness, centuries later, when the Pillar of Cloud went before them by day, and the Pillar of Fire protected their rear by night.

"And Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau, his brother, unto the land of Seir, the country of Edom. And he commanded them, saying, Thus shall ye speak unto my lord Esau; Thy servant Jacob saith thus, I have sojourned with Laban, and stayed there until now; and I have oxen, and asses, flocks, and men-servants, and women-servants; and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find grace in thy sight." (Gen. 32: 3-5.) As yet Jacob had heard nothing of his brother Esau, save that he was now settled in the land of Seir; but recalling the past, remembering the angry threat of the man, he was plainly apprehensive of the consequences of meeting him again. He, therefore, decided to send messengers before him, much as an army which is

marching through an enemy's country sends on spies in advance. These messengers were evidently instructed to sound Esau (for they returned to Jacob with their report), and if needs be to appease his anger. These messengers were carefully instructed what they should say to Esau, how they should conduct themselves in his presence, and the impression they must aim to make upon him—all designed to conciliate. While they were coached to say nothing but what was strictly true, nevertheless, the *craftiness* of Jacob comes out plainly in the words he puts into the mouths of his messengers:

“And he commanded them, saying, Thus shall ye speak unto my lord Esau; Thy servant Jacob saith thus, I have sojourned with Laban, and stayed there until now; and I have oxen, and asses, flocks, and men servants, and women servants; and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find grace in thy sight.” (Gen. 32: 4, 5.) Jacob does not insist on the fulfillment of the blessing which he had obtained from his father. Isaac had said, “Be lord *over* thy brother, and let thy mother's sons bow down *to thee*.” But here Jacob refuses to press the claim of his precedence, and instead of requiring that Esau should “bow down” unto him, he refers to Esau as “*his* lord” and takes the place of a servant”! Note, too, nothing is said of the reason why he had fled to Padan-Aram—all reference to his outwitting of Esau is carefully passed over—instead, he naively says, “I have *sojourned* (not found refuge) with Laban, and stayed there until now.” Once again be it remarked, Jacob would have Esau plainly to understand that he had not come to *claim the double portion*, nor even to seek a division of their father's inheritance—he had no need for this, for God had given him plenty of this world's goods. How plainly the native shrewdness of our patriarch comes out in all this needs not be argued.

“And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, We came to thy brother Esau, and also he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him.” (Gen. 32: 6.) It would seem from the sequel that the messengers sent out by Jacob never delivered their message, but only went far enough to discover that Esau was advancing toward them accompanied by four hundred men—to them, no doubt, with hostile intentions. It must have come upon Jacob as a terrible shock to learn that his brother was already ac-

quainted with his movements. It could only be about a fortnight at most since Jacob had left his uncle's farm, and as his journey had been conducted with all possible secrecy (in order to escape from Laban), how could Esau have learned of it at all? Was his thirst for revenge upon his brother so great that he had had him watched all these years? Was there some spy of his in the employ of Laban, who had now secretly communicated with Esau? Someone must have informed him, and the fact that Esau was now advancing upon him was disquieting news indeed. "*Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed*" (32: 7)—a guilty conscience needs no accusing.

"And he divided the people that was with him, and the flocks, and herds, and the camels, into two bands; and said, If Esau come to the one company, and smite it, then the other company which is left shall escape." (32: 7, 8.) There seemed no time to be lost, so Jacob acted promptly, and with accustomed shrewdness. First he divided his people and his flocks into two bands, so that if Esau came up with one and smote it, the other at least might escape. Second he betook himself to prayer. Ere condemning Jacob here, let us examine our own hearts and remember our own ways. How often we come to God only as a *last resort*! How often we scheme and plan, and not until *afterwards* do we cry unto God. Alas, how often we act on the principles of that God-dishonoring proverb that "God helps those who help themselves"—as though anybody was sufficient to "help himself" without God first helping him! The truth is rather, and how blessed, that God is ever ready to help those who have learned by sad experience that they are quite *unable* to "help themselves." His promise is "He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increaseth strength." (Isa. 40:29.)

There is not a little in the prayer of Jacob which is worthy of close attention, the more so as it was a prevailing prayer, and that it is the *first* recorded real prayer in the Bible. "And Jacob said, O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the Lord which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee; I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast showed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands. Deliver me, I pray thee,

from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau; for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me, and the mother with the children. And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude." (32: 9-12.) Notice first the God to whom he prayed. He approached God not merely as God the Creator, but as "the God of his father Abraham and the God of his father Isaac." It was God in *Covenant relationship*. This was laying hold of the Divine faithfulness; it was the prayer of faith. It means much to approach God thus; to appeal to Him on the ground of a sure and established relationship. We come before God not as the God of our forefathers, but as the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, and therefore *our* "God and Father." It is as we plead *this* relationship He is pleased to bless us.

Second, Jacob *cast himself on the sure Word of Jehovah*, pleading before Him His promise. He humbly reminded the Lord how He had said, "Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and *I will* deal well with thee." Here again we do well to learn from Jacob. The Scriptures contain many promises given to believers in general, and it is our individual privilege to plead them before God in particular, the more so when, like our patriarch, we encounter difficulties and opposition in the way wherein He has directed us to walk. Jacob pleaded a definite promise; so must we. In 2 Cor. 12: 9 we read, "My grace is sufficient for thee." Come to the Throne of Grace at the beginning of each day, reverently and believingly remind the Lord of this declaration of His, and then say with one of old, "Do as Thou hast said." (2 Sam. 7: 25.) Again, we read in Phil. 4: 19, "My God shall supply all your need." Tell the Lord of this in the hour of emergency, and say, Lord "Do as Thou hast said."

Third, Jacob *fully acknowledged his own utter lack of desert*. He confessed that the Lord was in no wise *his* debtor. He took a lowly place before the Most High. He owned that "*he was not worthy of the least of all God's mercies.*" Mark this well, dear reader, for very little teaching is heard in these days that leads to self-abasement. It has become a rarity to hear a saint of God confessing his *unworthiness*. There is so much said about living on a high plane of spirituality, so much Laodicean boasting, that many are afraid to acknowledge before other believers that

they are “not worthy of the least of God’s mercies.” One sometimes wonders if this is the chief reason why so few of us have any real power in prayer today. Certain it is that we must get down into the dust before God if we would receive His blessing. We must come before Him as empty-handed supplicants, if He is to fill us. We must own our ill deserts, and be ready to receive from Him on the ground of grace *alone* if we are to have our prayers answered.

Finally, notice *the motive* which actuated Jacob in presenting the petition he did. That for which he made request was expressed as follows: “Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau; for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me, and the mother with the children.” At first glance it would appear that our patriarch was moved by nothing higher than the natural affections of the human heart. It would seem that this was the petition of a kind husband and a tender father. But as we re-read this request of Jacob in the light of the closing words of his prayer, we shall discover he was prompted by a far worthier and higher motive. He at once added “And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make *thy seed* as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.” In this conclusion to the prayer we may see not only a further pleading of God’s promise, but an eye to *God’s glory*. Jehovah had promised to make Jacob’s seed as the sand of the sea, but if his wife and children were slain how then could God’s promise be fulfilled! Now it is natural, and by no means wrong, for us to be deeply concerned over the salvation of our loved ones; but our chief concern must center itself not in the well-being of those who are united to us by the ties of blood or intimate friendship, but for *the glory of God*. “*Whatsoever* ye do (in prayer, as in everything else) do all to the glory of God”—to this everything else must be subordinated. Here, then, is a searching test: Why as I so anxious to see certain ones saved?—simply because they are near and dear to me? or that God may be glorified and Christ magnified in their salvation? May Divine grace purge us of selfishness and purify our *motives* in prayer. And may God use these few words and cause both writer and reader to cry, with ever increasing fervor, “Lord, teach us to pray.”

XXXIV. JACOB AT PENIEL: GENESIS 32

In our last article we contemplated Jacob as he continued on his way home from Padan-Aram where he had lived as an exile for so long. As Jacob went on his way "the angels of God met him," apparently in two distinct companies or "hosts," probably one of them to his rear and the other before him. It was suggested that there was a symbolic meaning to this ordering of the angels; that as God had just delivered our patriarch from Laban and his company, who were now left behind, so would he deliver him from Esau and his company which were ahead of him. After the angels had disappeared, Jacob sent out messengers to meet Esau, to pacify him with friendly overtures, and thus prepare for their meeting. Shortly afterwards these messengers returned to Jacob bringing with them the discomfiting news that Esau was advancing, accompanied by no less than four hundred men. Jacob was "greatly afraid and distressed," and after dividing his party and possessions into two bands, he at once betook himself to earnest prayer. We considered this prayer at some length, and sought to point out some of its striking and suggestive features. It was a prayer of faith, and one which, in its general principles, we do well to copy.

What followed Jacob's prayer is now to engage our attention. A striking contrast is immediately presented to our notice, a contrast which seems unthinkable but for the sad fact that it is so often repeated in our own experiences. Jacob at once turns from the exercise of faith to the manifestation of unbelief, from prayer to scheming, from God to his own fleshly devices. "And he lodged there that same night; and took of that which came to his hand a present for Esau his brother." (32: 13.)

There was nothing inherently wrong in thus sending a present to his advancing brother; it was the *motive* which actuated him which is censurable, and which is "written for our admonition." (1 Corinthians 10: 11.) In the verses which follow the Holy Spirit lays bare for us the heart of Jacob, that we may the better become acquainted with our own deceitful and wicked hearts. Had Jacob's motive been a righteous and praiseworthy one there was no need for him

to have been at so much care and trouble in arranging his present for Esau. First he divided his extravagant present into three parts, or droves (for it consisted of cattle), putting a space between each and thus spreading them out to the best advantage, with the obvious intention of making as great an impression as possible upon his brother. Next, he commanded the servants who were entrusted with the care of his present, that when they should meet Esau and he enquired who these flocks and herds belonged to, they should say, "these be thy *servant's* Jacob's; it is a present sent unto my *lord* Esau." Clearly, the message which Jacob sent to Esau was utterly beneath the dignity of a child of God; such fawning phrases as "my lord Esau" and "thy servant Jacob" tell their own sad tale. This obsequious servility before a man of the world evidenced the state of his heart. Clearly, Jacob was *afraid* of Esau, and was no longer exercising confidence in God. Finally, Jacob's real design is made still more evident when we note his own soliloquizing—"For he said I will appease him with the present that goeth before me, and afterward I will see his face; preadventure he will accept of me." (32. 20.)

Instead of trusting in the Lord to work in him a spirit of conciliation, he undertook himself to propitiate Esau—"I" will appease him. But mark carefully, dear reader, that after all his scheming and devising he could say only "*peradventure* he will accept of me!" So it is still; after all our fleshly efforts have been put forth there is *no confidence* begotten thereby, nothing but an uncertain "*peradventure*" for our pains. How different from the way of faith, and the calm but certain assurance which is the blessed fruit of resting on the Divine promise and trusting God to undertake *for us*?

Ere proceeding further we would pause to consider a pertinent and pressing question which naturally arises out of what we have seen above: How was it possible for Jacob to turn to fleshly scheming and efforts of his own to appease Esau when just before he had prayer with such earnestness to God, and had not failed to plead the Divine promises? Was Jacob after all an *un-believer*? Surely not—God's dealings with him previously dispel the idea. Had he then "*fallen from grace*" and *become* an unbeliever? And again we must reject any such suggestion, for the Scriptures are plain and explicit on the point that one who has been born

again cannot be unborn—an unfaithful and unworthy child of God I may be, but I am still *His child*, nevertheless. The gifts and calling of God are “without repentance”—“without change of mind.” (Romans 11: 29.) Once a sinner has been called out of darkness into God’s marvelous light, and once God has given to him light and salvation, he never undoes that calling or withdraws His gift, for the sinner did nothing whatever of himself to *merit* God’s gift, and he can do nothing to *demerit* it. The basis on which God bestows His gifts is not that of works and human desert, but that of sovereign grace alone. This does not argue that we shall therefore be careless and free to sin as much as we want, for that would only go to prove that *we* had never received God’s “gift” of salvation; rather shall we become more careful and have a greater hatred of sin, not because we are afraid of the consequences of wrong doing, but because we are desirous of showing our deep gratitude to God, by a life which *is* pleasing to Him, in return for His abounding mercy and goodness to us.

But this still leaves unanswered our question concerning Jacob. Jacob *was* a believer in God—a careful study of his prayer as recorded in Genesis 32: 9-12 evidences that. But though Jacob was a believer there still remained the “flesh,” the old evil nature in him. And to this he gave way. The flesh is ever unbelieving, and where it is not constantly judged breaks forth in God-dishonoring activities. The clearest exemplification and demonstration of the two natures in the believer is to be seen in the history of Jacob recorded faithfully by the Holy Spirit not for our emulation but for our “warning.” The same two natures are in every child of God today, the spiritual and the carnal, the one which believes God and the other which disbelieves. It is because of this we need to cry daily, “Lord, I believe; *help Thou mine unbelief.*” (Mark 9: 24.)

“So went the present over before him; and himself lodged that night in the company. And he rose up that night, and took his two wives, and his two women-servants, and his eleven sons, and passed over the ford Jabbok. And he took them, and sent them over the brook, and sent over that he had. And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day.” (32: 21-24.) This passage introduces us to a most important crisis in the life of Jacob. The book of Genesis presents our patriarch

in two characters, as he is exhibited to us as Jacob and as Israel; the one looking at the natural man, and the other at the spiritual man, the one telling of how Divine grace found him and the other of what Divine grace made him—this will become clearer as we continue these studies, if the Lord will. We are now to consider the memorable occasion when Jacob formally received his new name of Israel, when he who was rightly termed “the supplanter” became known as “God commands.”

The circumstances under which Jacob formally received his new name are worthy of the closest attention. He was, as we have seen, in great distress. News had come to hand that Esau, accompanied by four hundred men, was on the way to meet him. That for which he had labored so hard and so long to obtain in Padan-Aram seemed about to be wrested from his hands; his wives and his children appeared to be in imminent danger, and his own life in peril. As a precautionary measure he had sent his family over the brook Jabbok,* and now he was left alone—more desolate than when twenty years before he had left his father’s house. Night had fallen, when suddenly a mysterious stranger appeared, and in the darkness grappled with him. All through the night this strange conflict continued.

“And Jacob was left alone.” In this sentence we have the first key to the incident we are now considering. On these words it has been well said, “To be left alone with God is the only true way of arriving at a just knowledge of ourselves and our ways. We can never get a true estimate of nature and all its actings until we have weighed them in the balances of the sanctuary, and there we may ascertain their real worth. No matter what we may think about ourselves, nor yet what man may think about us, the great question is, What does God think about us? And the answer to this question can only be learned when we are ‘left alone.’ Away from the world, away from self, away from all the thoughts, reasonings, imaginings, and emotions of mere nature, and ‘alone with God,’—thus, and thus alone, can we get a correct judgment about ourselves.” (C. H. M.)

“And there wrestled a man with him.” In Hosea 12:4 this “man” is termed “the angel”; that is, we take it; “*the* Angel of the Covenant,” or, in other words, the Lord Jesus

*Jabbok signifies “emptying”—appropriate name, for it emphasizes the fact that Jacob was “left alone.”

Himself in theophanic manifestation. It was the same One who appeared unto Abraham just before the destruction of Sodom. In Genesis xviii: 2 we read of "three men," but later in the chapter one of them is spoken of as "the Lord." (5:13.) So here in Genesis 32, at the close of the conflict between this "Man" and our patriarch, Jacob called the name of the place Peniel, saying, "For I have *seen God* face to face." (32: 30.)

"And there wrestled a Man *with him*." Note we are not told that Jacob wrestled with the mysterious Visitor, but "there wrestled a Man *with him*," that is, with Jacob. This incident has often been referred to as an illustration and example of a saint's power in prayer, but such a thought is wide of the mark. Jacob was not wrestling with this Man to obtain a blessing, instead, the Man was wrestling with Jacob to gain some object from him. As to what this object is the best of the commentators are agreed—it was to reduce Jacob to a sense of his nothingness, to cause him to see what a poor, helpless and worthless creature he was; it was to teach us through him the all important lesson that in recognized weakness lies our strength.

"And there wrestled a Man with him *till the breaking of the day*." From dark till dawn the mysterious conflict continued. There are those who have taken exception to the view set forth above, and who argue that if it was God who was wrestling with Jacob for the purpose of bringing him to a sense of his impotency He would have taken a shorter cut and arrived at the designed end much quicker. But such an objection loses sight of the wondrous patience which God ever exercises toward His own. He is "*long suffering* to usward." Long does He bear with our fleshly struggling, but in the end He accomplishes His purpose and grace triumphs. The delay only serves to provide opportunity for Him to display His infinite forbearance.

"And when He saw that He prevailed not against him, He touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint as He wrestled with him." This shows us how quickly and how easily God could, when it so pleased Him, bring to an end Jacob's resistance and reduce him to helplessness; all He had to do was but to "*touch* the hollow of his thigh," and in a moment Jacob's power to continue wrestling was gone! And here we get the second key to the incident. Jacob was now brought to the end of

his own resources. One swift stroke from the Divine hand and he was rendered utterly powerless. And *this* is the purpose God has before Him in His dealings with us. One of the principal designs of our gracious heavenly Father in the ordering of our path, in the appointing of our testings and trials, in the discipline of His love, is to bring us to the end of ourselves, to show us our own powerlessness, to teach us to have no confidence in the flesh, that His strength may be perfected in our conscious and realized weakness.

“And He said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.” (32: 26.) Here is the third key which unlocks to us the precious contents of our narrative. Here we see the object of the Heavenly Wrestler accomplished. No longer could Jacob wrestle; all he could do was *cling*. The mysterious Stranger brought Jacob to the point where he had to *lean his entire weight on Him!* Hitherto Jacob had sought to order his own life, planning, scheming and devising; but now he was “left alone” he is shown what a perfectly helpless creature he was in himself. “The seat of his strength being touched, he learnt to say, ‘I will not let *Thee* go’—‘other refuge have I none; clings my helpless soul to *Thee*.’ This was a new era in the history of the supplanting, planning, Jacob. Up to this point he had held fast by his own ways and means, but now he is brought to say ‘I will not let *thee* go.’” But mark carefully, it was not until “the hollow of his thigh was touched” that Jacob said this; and, it is not until we fully realize our own helplessness and nothingness that we are brought to cling to God and really *seek* His blessing, for note, not only did Jacob say “I will not let *Thee* go,” but he added “except *Thou bless me.*”

“And He said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. And He said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel; for as a prince *hast thou* power with God and with men, and *hast* prevailed.” (32: 27, 28.) We cannot but feel that these verses have been generally misunderstood by most of the commentators. Why should the Divine Wrestler ask our patriarch his name, if not to emphasize and press upon the conscience of Jacob the force of it, namely, supplanter or contender. And in the new name here given him, it seems to us Jacob received a *rebukey*, though its meaning also well sums up the central teaching of this incident which describes the occasion when he re-

ceived it. But what is the significance of "Israel," his new name? The marginal reading of the R. V. gives "God striveth" which we believe conveys the real thought, though, "God *commandeth*" would probably be a happier alternative. One who was a profound Hebrew scholar tells us that "names compounded with 'El' have that of the nominative when the other part of the name is a verb as here. Out of some forty Hebrew names compounded with 'El' or 'Jah,' God is always the Doer of what the verb means. Thus, Hiel=God liveth; Daniel=God judgeth; Gabriel=God is my strength." Israel would, therefore, be "God *commandeth*." Does not this furnish a most appropriate significance to the name of the Nation which were and will be again the center of God's *governmental* dealings on earth—Israel, "God *commandeth*!"

"And He said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel; for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed." (32:28.) "*As a prince*"—as a deposer, orderer (see the various renderings of the Hebrew word: rendered "ruler" thirty-three times); used not to dignify but to reproach. "*Hast thou power*"—hast thou contended (the Hebrew cognate is translated "rebellion," "revolt," etc.); Jacob had contended with Esau in the womb and thus got his name "Jacob." And long had Jacob, "the orderer" of his life *contended* "with God and with men." "*And hast prevailed*" or succeeded. To quote from the Companion Bible: "He had contended for the birthright and had succeeded. (25:29-34.) He had contended for the blessing and succeeded. (27.) He had contended with Laban and succeeded. (31.) He had contended with 'men' and succeeded. Now he contended with God (the Wrestler), and fails. Hence his new name was changed to Isra-el, God *commands*, to teach him the greatly needed lesson of dependance upon God." Jacob had arranged everything for meeting and appeasing his brother Esau. Now, God is going to take him in hand and order all things for him. To learn this lesson, and take this low place before God, Jacob must be humbled. He must be lamed as to his own strength, and made to limp. Jacob's new name was to be henceforth the constant reminder to him that he had learned, and was never to forget this lesson; that it was not he who was to order and arrange his affairs, but God; and his *new name*, Israel, henceforth to be, him, that "God com-

mandeth." As Jacob *he* had "prevailed," but now as Israel *God* would command and prevail.

In the above incident then—together with its setting and sequel—we have a most striking and typical picture of the "flesh" in a believer, its vitality and incurability, God's marvelous forbearance toward it and dealings with it and victory over it. First, in choosing and arranging the present for Esau we see the *character* and *activities* of the "flesh"—devising and scheming. Second, in Jacob's experience we are shown the *worthlessness* and *helplessness* of the "flesh." Third, we learn that *our nothingness* can be discovered only as we get "alone" with God. Fourth, in the Man coming to wrestle with Jacob we see *God subduing* the "flesh" in the believer, and in the prolongation of the wrestle all through the night we have more than a hint of the patience He exercises and the *slowness* of His process—for only *gradually* is the "flesh" subdued. Fifth, in the touching of the hollow of Jacob's thigh we are enabled to discern the *method* God pursues, namely, the bringing us to a vivid *realization* of our utter helplessness. Sixth, in the clinging of Jacob to the God-man we discover that it is not until He has written the sentence of death on our members that we shall *cast ourselves* unreservedly on the Lord. Seventh, in the fact that Jacob's name was now changed to Israel we learn that it is only after we have discovered our nothingness and helplessness that we are *willing and ready* for God to command and order our lives for us. Eighth, in the words, "and He blessed him *there*," we learn that when God "commands" *blessing* follows. Ninth, behold the lovely sequel—"And as he passed over Peniel *the sun rose upon him*." (32:31.) Does not this define or rather describe (symbolically) the spiritual nature of the "blessing!" Tenth, note how accurate is the picture—"The sun rose upon him, and he *halted* upon his thigh. Therefore the children of Israel eat not of the sinew which shrank, which is upon the hollow of the thigh, unto this day; because He touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh *in the sinew that shrank*." (32:31, 32.) The sinew only "shrank," it was not *removed*. Nor is the "flesh" eradicated from the believer!

Many are the important lessons taught in the Scripture we have been examining, but for lack of space we can but barely name some of them: (1) It is *natural* to the "flesh" to plan and scheme and to desire the ordering of our lives.

(2) The mind of the flesh deems itself fully competent *to order* our life. (3) But God in His faithfulness and love determines to correct this habit in His child. (4) Long does He bear with our self-confidence and self-sufficiency, but He must and will bring us to the end of ourselves. (5) To accomplish this He lays *His hand on us*, and makes us conscious of our utter helplessness. (6) This He does by “withering” us in the seat of our creature strength, and by writing the sentence of death on our flesh. (7) As the result we learn to *cling* to Him in our weakness, and seek His “blessing.” (8) What a lesson is this! The “flesh” cannot be subdued, but must be “withered” in the very sinew of its power—“because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, *neither indeed can be.*” (9) That which hinders us in our growth in grace is not so much our spiritual weakness as it is confidence in our natural strength! (10) Not until these truths are apprehended shall we cease to be “contenders,” and shall we gladly take our place as *clay* in the hands of the Potter, happy for Him to “command” and order our lives for us. (11) Then will it be with us, as with Jacob—“And He *blessed* him there.” (12) And so will the sequel, too, prove true of us—“The sun rose upon him,” for “the path of the just shineth more and more unto the perfect day.”

XXXV. JACOB MEETING ESAU: GENESIS 33

“And Jacob lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold, Esau came, and with him four hundred men. And he divided the children unto Leah, and unto Rachel, and unto the two handmaids. And he put the handmaids and their children foremost, and Leah and her children after, and Rachel and Joseph hindermost. And he passed over before them, and bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother.” (33:1-3.) Here again we meet with one of those strange and sudden transitions in this living narrative of our patriarch’s history. Truth is stranger than fiction, it is said, and no doubt this is so, but certainly truth is more accurate than fiction. In the Epistle of James the one who is a hearer of the Word and not a doer is said to be “like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass” (1:24.) There is no other book in the whole range and realm of literature which so marvelously uncovers the innermost recesses of the human heart, and so faithfully delineates its workings. In the biographical portions of Scripture the Holy Spirit, as everywhere, paints human nature in the colors of truth. An uninspired writer would have followed Jacob’s wondrous experience at Peniel by a walk which was henceforth flawless. But not so the Holy Spirit. He has recorded just what did happen, and shows us Jacob distrusting God and yielding to the fear of man. Thus it is all through. Abraham in faith-obedience to the call of God went ont “not knowing whither he went,” but after his arrival in Canaan, when a famine arose, he seeks refuge in Egypt. Elijah displays unexampled courage on Mt. Carmel, as alone he confronted the four hundred priests of Baal; but the next we hear of him he is fleeing from Jezebel! David dares to meet Goliath, but later, he runs away from Saul. And thus we have recorded the sad inconsistencies of the noblest of God’s saints. So it was again here with Jacob: what a change from clinging to the Divine Wrestler to prostrating himself before Esau!

There is a lesson and warning for each of us here which we do well to take to heart. It is one thing to be privileged with a special visitation from or manifestation of God to us, but it is quite another to live in the power of it. Jacob’s

experience at this point reminds us of the favored disciples who were with Christ in "the holy mount." They were deeply impressed with what they saw and heard, and Peter, acting as spokesman, said, "Lord, it is good for us to be here." But observe the sequel. Next day a father brought his lunatic son to the disciples, but "they could not cure him," (Luke) and when they asked the Lord the cause of their failure He said, "Because of your *unbelief*." Is not the juxtaposition of these two scenes—the Transfiguration witnessed by the disciples, and their failure in the presence of need—intended to teach us the lesson that unless faith remains active we shall cease to live in the power of the Vision of Glory. Such is also the lesson we learn from Jacob's failure following immediately the visitation from God from Peniel. Ah, there was but One who could say "I do *always* those things that please Him." (John 8:29.)

Let us mark for our instruction just *wherein* Jacob failed. He failed to use in faith the blessedness of his new name. The lessons which the all-night wrestle ought to have taught him were the worthlessness and futility of all his own efforts; that instead of putting confidence in the flesh, he needed to cling to God; and in the new name he received—Israel, God commands—he should have learned that God is the Orderer of our lives and can well be trusted to undertake for us at every point. But O, how slow we are to appropriate and live in the blessedness of the meaning of the new names which God has given *us* "Saint!" "Son!" "Heir!" How little we live our daily lives under the comfort, the inspiration, the strength, the elevation, which such titles ought to bring to us and produce from us. Instead of trusting God to manage Esau for him Jacob at once resorts to his old devisings and subtleties.

Hardly had Jacob passed over the brook Jabbok and regained his family when, lifting up his eyes, he beheld his brother approaching accompanied by four hundred men. To flee was impossible; so at once he took whatever precautionary measures were possible under the circumstances. He had just sufficient time before Esau came up to arrange his family, placing his different children with their respective mothers, and putting those in the rear that he had the most love for. This shows that though outwardly he appeared to treat Esau with confidence, nevertheless, he was secretly afraid of him. He was obliged, however, to put the

best face he could upon it, and goes out at the head of his company to meet his brother—"And he passed over before them, and bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother." This betokened the fact that Jacob was ready to take the place of *complete submission* to his elder brother. His action reveals plainly the real state of Jacob's heart, he was anxious to impress upon Esau that he intended to make no claim of preëminence but rather was willing to be subordinate to him. This will be even more apparent when we attend to the words he used on this occasion.

"And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him" (33:4.) It seems to us that most of the commentators have missed the point of this. Instead of discovering here the power, goodness, and faithfulness of God, they see only the magnanimity of Esau. Personally we have no doubt that had Esau been left to himself his reception of his erring brother would have been very different from what it was. But he was *not* left to himself. Jacob had prayed earnestly to God and had pleaded His promise. And now, He in whose hands is the king's heart and who "turneth it whithersoever He will" (Proverbs 21:1), inclined the fierce and envious heart of Esau to deal kindly with Jacob. Mark it: and he "fell on his neck and kissed him!" Is not the hand of God further to be seen in the fact that Jacob's wives and children *all* uniformly "bowed" too, to Esau—"Then the handmaidens came near, they and their children, and they bowed themselves. And Leah also with her children came near, and bowed themselves; and after came Joseph near and Rachel, and they bowed themselves." (33:6-7.)

"And he said, What meanest thou by all this drove which I met? And he said, These are to find grace in the sight of my lord." (33:8.) Esau desired to know the meaning of those droves of cattle which had been sent on to him earlier as a present. Jacob's answer is quite frank, but it shows what it was in which he placed his confidence—he was depending on his present, rather than upon God, to conciliate his brother. Note, too, as in verse 5 he had spoken of himself to his brother as "*thy servant*," so here, he terms Esau "*my lord*." Such obsequious cringing ill-became a child of God in the presence of a man of the world. The excessive deference shown to the brother he had wronged evidenced

a servile fear: the fawning obloquy was manifestly designed to imply that he was fully prepared to acknowledge Esau's seniority and superiority.

"And Esau said, I have enough, my brother; keep that thou hast unto thyself." (33:9.) Whether we are to admire these words of Esau or not is not easy to determine. They may have been the language of independency, or they may, which is more likely, have expressed the generosity of his heart. Esau was no pauper; in any case, no such present from Jacob was needed to heal the breach between them. Such was the plain implication of Esau's words, and in them we are shown the futility and needlessness of Jacob's scheming. Jacob had devoted much thought to the problem how *he* could best propitiate the brother whose anger he feared, and had gone to much expense and trouble to this end. But it accomplished nothing! It was all labor lost as the sequel shows. *God* had "appeased" Esau, just as before *He* had quietened Laban! How much better then had Jacob just been "still" and trusted in the Lord to act for him. Let us seek grace to learn this important lesson, that not only are all our fleshly plannings and efforts dishonoring to God, and that they are quite uncalled for and unnecessary, but also that in the end God sets them aside as they accomplish NOTHING.

Jacob was not satisfied with the generous words of his brother, and proceeded to press his present upon him, urging him to receive it as a token of good-will. "And Jacob said, Nay, I pray thee, if now I have found grace in thy sight, then receive my present at my hand; for therefore I have seen thy face, as though I had seen the face of God, and thou wast pleased with me." (v. 10.) The receiving of a present at the hands of another has always been regarded as a pledge of amity and good-will. None will receive a present from the hand of an enemy. The same principle underlies God's dealings with us. *He* will receive no offering from His sinful creatures until they are reconciled to Him by faith in the Atonement of His Son. Let the reader make no mistake upon this score. The Lord God will receive nothing from your hands until you have first received from His hands, received the Saviour which His love has provided for sinners. Many there are who suppose they must first bring something to God in order to win His favor. But no matter how beautiful their offering may

be, no matter what self-sacrifice it has entailed, if Christ is still rejected God will not accept it. To offer God your own works while continuing to despise Christ is but to *insult* Him and to walk in the way of Cain. The teaching of Scripture on this point is most emphatic—"The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord." (Proverbs 15:8.)

Jacob continues to press his suit. To have his present accepted would be proof to him that his brother no longer bore him any ill-will. Hence, he continues to assure him how highly his favor was regarded, yea, to have seen his face, was, he says, "as though I had seen the face of God." Finally, he adds "take, I pray thee, my blessing that is brought to thee; because God hath dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough." (v. 11.) In the end, he prevailed upon Esau to accept his present—"And he urged him, and he took it."

"And he said, Let us take our journey, and let us go, and I will go before thee. And he said unto him, My lord knoweth that the children are tender, and the flocks and herds with young are with me; and if men should overdrive them one day, all the flock will die. Let my lord, I pray thee, pass over before his servant; and I will lead on softly, according as the cattle that goeth before me and the children be able to endure, until I come unto my lord unto Seir." (33:12-14.) If there can be any question raised as to Jacob's secret fears when he met his brother, what we read of in these verses surely settles the point. The old Jacob is here very evident. Now that his brother had accepted his present, he was only too anxious for them to separate again. Esau suggests they resume the journey in each other's company. But this was not what Jacob wanted. Old memories might revive in Esau's mind, and when that time came Jacob wished to be far away. However, he could not afford to offend his brother, so Jacob, at once, begins to frame excuses as to why they should journey separately. Then Esau suggested that some of his own company should stay behind with Jacob—"And Esau said, Let me now leave with thee some of the folk that are with me." This was probably to afford protection for Jacob and his herds while passing through a wild and dangerous country. But Jacob seems to have suspected some unfriendly design lay behind Esau's offer, and so he declined

it—"What needeth it? Let me find grace in the sight of my lord."

The sequel is indeed a sad and humbling one. Not only was Jacob distrustful of his brother but he lied unto him. Jacob had said "let my lord, I pray thee, pass over before his servant . . . until I come unto my lord unto Seir." (v. 14.) But after Esau had taken his departure we read, "And Jacob journeyed to Succoth and built him a house, and made booths for his cattle." (v. 17.) Instead of making for Seir, the appointed meeting-place, he journeyed in another direction entirely. Even after the unexpected cordiality which Esau had displayed, Jacob would not believe that God had permanently subdued his brother's enmity; therefore did he mistrust Esau, refusing his offer of protection, and sought to avoid another meeting by a deliberate untruth. Alas, what is man! How true it is "that every man at his best state is altogether vanity." (Psalm 39:5.)

Jacob's unbelief explains why his journey back to the Land was delayed, for instead of pressing on home he settled down in Succoth. Not only so, but we are told that "Jacob came to Shalem, a city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from Padan-Aram; and pitched his tent before the city. And he bought a parcel of a field, where he had spread his tent, at the hand of the children of Hamor, Shechem's father, for a hundred pieces of money." (33:18-19.) And this in the very face of God's word "return unto the land of thy fathers, *and to thy kindred*, and I will be with thee." (31:3.) But he had to pay a dear price for his unbelief and disobedience. Divine retribution did not sleep. We have only to read what happened to his family while Jacob abode at Shechem to discover how, once more, Jacob was called upon to reap that which he had sown—Jacob's sojourn in Succoth was followed by the ruining of his only daughter!

Little light seems to have been given as yet upon the closing verse of our chapter—"And he erected there an altar, and called it God the God of Israel." (33:20.) That this was an act of faith on the part of Jacob cannot be doubted, but as to how high his faith rose the best of the expositors are not agreed. When Jacob denominated this altar "God the God of Israel" was he losing sight of Jehovah's *covenant relationship* with Abraham and his seed, and thinking of God merely as *his* God? Or, was he

appropriating to himself his new name of Israel? Which-ever view be the true one it should be carefully noted that in the very next word our patriarch received from the Lord it concerned the "altar" and intimated that God was not pleased with the altar he had erected in Succoth—"and God said unto Jacob, arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell *there*, and make *there* an altar unto God." (35:1.) But this belongs to our next Genesis study. In the meantime may Divine grace open our eyes fully to see the wickedness, as well as the vanity of placing any confidence in our fleshly devisings and bring us to trust the Lord with all our heart.

XXXVI. JACOB AT BETHEL AGAIN: GENESIS 35

In our last article we closed with Jacob parting from Esau and failing to keep his word and rejoin his brother at Seir. We pass over the sad record of the intervening chapter, asking our readers to turn to it for themselves. After passing through the grievous experiences narrated in Genesis 34, we might well have supposed that Jacob had been in a hurry to leave Shechem—yet, *whither* would he flee! Laban he had no desire to meet again. Esau he wished to avoid. And now from the Shechemites also he was anxious to get away. But whither should he go? Poor Jacob! He must have been in a grand quandary. Ah, but man's extremities are God's opportunities, and so it was shown to be here. Once more God appeared to him, and said, "Arise, *go up* to Bethel, and dwell there: and make there an altar unto God, that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother." (Genesis 35:1.)

In studying the above passage we have arrived at the conclusion that God's word to Jacob on this occasion was one of admonition. The reference to him "fleeing" from the face of Esau, takes us back, of course, to the time when Jacob first fled from home fearful of his brother's anger at the deception practiced on him in winning from their father the coveted blessing. On the first night out the Lord had appeared to our patriarch in a dream in which He promised to keep him in all places whither he went, and to bring him again into the land and unto his kindred. When Jacob awoke he said, "Surely the Lord is in this place" (28:16), and rising up early in the morning he took the stone on which his head had rested during the night and set it up for a pillar, pouring oil on the top of it, and calling the name of the place Bethel, which means "House of God." And there, we are told, "And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God: And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house." (Genesis 28:20-22.)

Probably thirty years at least had passed since Jacob had had that vision of the "ladder," and now God *reminds him*

of the pledge which our patriarch had failed to redeem. God here addressed Himself to Jacob's conscience, with respect to his neglect in performing his vow. God had performed *His* part, but Jacob had failed. God had preserved him whithersoever he had journeyed, and *had* brought him back safely to the land of Canaan; but now that Jacob had been in the land at least seven years (for in less time than this Simeon and Levi could not have reached man's estate—34: 25), yet, he had *not* gone up to Bethel.

That God's word to Jacob recorded in Genesis 35: 1, was a *reproof* is further evidenced by the immediate effect which it had upon him. Not only had Jacob failed to go to Bethel, but, what was worse, while Jehovah had been his personal God, his household was defiled by *idols*. Rebekah's stolen "teraphim" had proven a snare to the family. At the time Laban overtook them Jacob seems to have known nothing about these gods; later, however, he was evidently aware of their presence, but not until aroused by the Lord appearing to him did he exert his parental authority and have them *put away*. It is striking to note that though God Himself said nothing, directly, about the "teraphim" yet, the immediate effect of His words was to stir Jacob's conscience among you, and be clean, and change your garments" (35: about them—"Then Jacob said unto his household and to all that were with him, Put away the strange gods that are 2.) These words show that Jacob *was* aware of the corrupt practices of his family, and had only too long connived at them.

There is good reason to believe that the troubles into which Jacob fell at Shechem were due immediately to his failure in this very particular, and had he gone directly to Bethel his household had been purged the more promptly of the "strange gods" that were in it, and his children had escaped the taint which these of necessity must impart. Furthermore, had he gone sooner to Bethel his children would have been kept out of the way of temptation (34: 1), and then the impure and bloody conduct of which they were guilty had been prevented. Mark, too, how this second verse of Genesis 35 illustrates the awful spread of the leprosy of sin. At first the teraphim were hidden by Rachel, and none of the family except her seem to have known of them: but now Jacob had to command his "household" and "all that were with him" to "put away the strange gods"

which were among them. The moral is evident: spiritual neglect and trifling with temptation can issue only in evil and disaster. Let us not neglect God's House, nor delay to keep His commandments.

"And let us arise, and go up to Bethel; and I will make there an altar unto God, who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way that I went" (35:3). Jacob not only commands his household to put away their idols, but seeks to impress them with his own sentiments, and urges them all to accompany him to Bethel. His reciting to them how that God had "answered him in the day of his distress" not only argued the propriety of the step he was urging upon them, but would excite a hope that God might disperse the cloud which *now* hung on them on account of the late lamentable transactions in Shechem.

"And they gave unto Jacob all the strange gods which were in their hand, and all their ear-rings which were in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the oak which was by Shechem" (35:4). It is pleasing to observe the readiness with which his family acceded to Jacob's command. They not only gave up their "gods" but their "*ear-rings*" also. These, too, were frequently converted to the use of idolatrous practices, as is evident not only from the example of Aaron who made the calf out of the "golden ear-rings" (Exodus 32:2), but from Hosea 2:13 as well—"And I will visit upon her the days of Baalim, wherein she burned incense to them, and she decked herself with her *ear-rings* and her jewels, and she went after her lovers, and forgot Me, saith the Lord." That Jacob *buried* the teraphim and ear-rings, instead of attempting to convert them to a more honorable use, teaches us that the things of Satan must not be employed in the service of God, and that we need to forsake even the appearance of evil. There can be no doubt that in the readiness with which the family acted in response to Jacob's command we are to see *the hand of the Lord*. In fact the power of God is evident at every point in this incident: the immediate effect of God's word to Jacob to go to Bethel (the effect on his conscience, evidenced by the prompt purging of his household); the unanimous response of his family; and further, what we read of in verse 5 all demonstrate this—"and they journeyed; and the terror of God was upon the cities that were round about them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob."

In the scripture last quoted we find a striking illustration of the sovereign control which God exercises over and upon men, even upon those who are not His people. Evidently the Shechemites were so enraged against Jacob and his family that had not God put forth His power they had promptly avenged the wrong done them. But not a hand can be raised against any of the Lord's people without His direct permission, and even when our enemies are incensed against us, all God does is to put His "terror" upon them and they are impotent. How true it is that "the king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water: He turneth it whithersoever He will" (Proverbs 21:1). *And God is still the same*: living, ruling, almighty. There is no doubt in the writer's mind that in the authenticated reports of "the Angels at Mons" we see in the terror which caused the German cavalry to turn about and flee from the outnumbered English a modern example of what we read of in Genesis 35:5—"And the terror of God was upon the cities that were round about them, *and they did not pursue* after the sons of Jacob."

"So Jacob came to Luz, which is in the land of Canaan, that is, Bethel, he and all the people that were with him. And he built there an altar, and called the place El-Bethel; because there God appeared unto him, when he fled from the face of his brother" (35:6, 7). It is significant that Bethel is here first called by its original name, "Luz" which means "departure." From God Jacob had departed for (as previously pointed out) Jacob built no "altar" during all the years he sojourned in Padan-Aram, and only now does he return to God, to the "house of God," to the altar of God, and in order to do this he must needs retrace his steps and return to the place from which he had "departed." So it was with Abraham before him, for after he left Egypt (whither he had gone in unbelief) we read, "And he went on his journeys from the south even to Bethel, unto the place where his tent had been *at the beginning*, between Bethel and Ai; unto the place of the altar, which he had made there *at the first*" (Genesis 13:3, 4). And so it has to be with us.

"But Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, died, and she was buried beneath Bethel under an oak, and the name of it was called Allon-Bachuth. And God appeared unto Jacob again, when he came out of Padan-Aram and blessed him" (35:8, 9). In principle these two verses are inseparably connected.

No mention is made of Deborah in the sacred narrative from the time Jacob left his father's house until the time when he had now returned to Bethel. The departure and the return of Jacob are thus linked together for us by the mention of Deborah "*Rebekah's nurse.*" The same thing is seen again in the verse which follows. "And God appeared unto Jacob *again, when he came out of Padan-Aram.*" God had appeared to him just before he entered Padan-Aram, and He now appeared "*again*" when he came out of Padan-Aram. All the years spent with Laban were lost, as were also those lived in Succoth and Shechem. The twenty years he served with his father-in-law were so much "wood, hay and stubble." We find another illustration of this same sad principle in Hebrew 11:29-30, where we read, first, "*by faith* Israel passed through the Red Sea," and the next thing we read is, "*by faith* the walls of Jericho fell down." The forty years wandering in the wilderness in unbelief is passed over! Nothing of "*faith*" was to be found in *that* period of Israel's history. The forty years was so much *lost time!* Ah, my reader, when our records are reviewed at the Judgment-seat of Christ methinks there will be similar tragic *blanks* in most, possibly all, of *our* lives.

The sequel of Jacob's return to Bethel is very beautiful, but we cannot here dwell much upon the details. God appeared unto Jacob again, reaffirmed that he should be called by his new name Israel, revealed Himself as the "Almighty" or "All-Sufficient One," bade him to be "fruitful and multiply," assuring him that "a nation and a company of nations should be of him, and kings should come out of his loins;" and, finally, ratifying the gift of the land unto his fathers, unto himself, and unto his sons (35: 11, 12).

That Jacob was now fully restored to communion with God is seen from the fact that he now once more "set up a pillar" in the place where he had talked with God and poured oil thereon (35: 14, and cf. 28: 18).

Next, we are told "And they journeyed from Bethel; and there was but a little way to come to Ephrath." How significant and how beautiful is the moral order here: Ephrath is Bethlehem (verse 19), and Bethlehem signifies "House of Bread." Note carefully the words, "There is *but a little way* (*i. e.* from Bethel) to come to Ephrath." Yes, it is but a short distance from the place where the soul

is *restored* to communion with God to the place where nourishment and satisfaction of heart are to be found!

"And Rachael died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem" (35:19). Thus the leading link of Jacob's life at Padan-Aram was now severed! The "teraphim" had been "hid under the oak" (verse 4), Deborah (the link with his old unregenerate life) had also been "buried under an oak" (verse 8), and now Rachael is "buried." Death is written large across this scene. And we too must have "the sentence of death" written on our members if we would walk in full communion with God and dwell in the house of bread. And is it not lovely to mark that from the dying Rachael there came forth *Benjamin*—"the Son of the right hand!"

Having considered some of the moral lessons which the 35th chapter of Genesis inculcates, we would in closing point out how that once again we have here another of those marvelous typical pictures in which this first book of Scripture abounds; this time a dispensational foreshadowment of the coming *restoration of Israel*.

1. Just as Jacob left the house of God (Bethel—Genesis 28) for the land of exile, so has the Nation which had descended from him.
2. Just as God said to Jacob "Arise, go up to Bethel," return to the place of Divine communion and privilege, so will He yet call to Israel.
3. Just as the immediate effect upon Jacob of God's "call" was to purge his house from idolatry and to issue in a change of his ways (emblemized by "changing of *garments*"—35:2), so the Nation will yet be purged from their final idolatry (in connection with Antichrist) and be changed in their ways and walk.
4. Just as Jacob acknowledged that God had "answered him in the day of his *distress*" (35:3), so will Israel when He responds to their cry in the great Tribulation.
5. Just as the "terror of God" fell upon the Shechemites (35:5), so will His terror fall once more upon the Gentiles when He resumes His dealings with His covenant people.
6. Just as when Jacob returned to Bethel he built another "altar," so will Israel once more worship God acceptably when they are restored to His favor.
7. Just as now the link with Jacob's past was severed (the death of Rebekah—35:8), so will Israel die to their past life.
8. Just as God now appeared unto Jacob "again," so will He, in the coming day, manifest Himself to Israel as of old.
9. Just as God then

said "Thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name" (35:10), so his descendants shall no more be called Jews, but as Israel shall they be known. 10. Just as God now for the first time discovered unto Jacob his name "Almighty," so on Israel's restoration will the Messiah be revealed as "the wonderful Counsellor, *the mighty God.*" 11. Just as national prosperity was here assured unto Jacob—"be fruitful and multiply, a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee" 35:11—so shall the prosperity and blessings promised through the prophets become theirs. 12. Just as God here said unto Jacob "the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee will I give it and to thy seed after thee" (35:12), so will He say to the restored nation. 13. Just as Jacob poured oil on the pillar he erected at Bethel, so will God pour the Holy Spirit upon Israel and upon all flesh. 14. Just as Jacob found Bethel to be but a little way from Bethlehem, so shall Israel at last find the Bread of Life once they have had their second Bethel. 15. Just as Benjamin *now* took his place in Jacob's household, so will the true Benjamin—"Son of his mother's sorrow, but also of his father's right hand"—take His rightful place among redeemed Israel. There are other points in this typical picture which we leave for the reader to search out for himself. Surely as the Christian ponders the wondrous and blessed future which yet awaits the Israel of God he cannot do less than heed that earnest word—"Ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence, and give Him no rest, till He establish, until He make Jerusalem a praise in the earth" (Isaiah 62:6, 7)!

XXXVII. THE SUNSET OF JACOB'S LIFE:
GENESIS 37-49

It is not easy to decide which of the two is the more wonderful and blessed—the grace of God which has given the believer a perfect standing in Christ, or the grace which ever bears with the believer who fails so miserably in making his state correspond with his standing. Which is the more remarkable—that, judiciously, my sins are all put away forever, or, that in His governmental dealings God treats so leniently with my sins as a saint? Though it is true we reap as we sow, it also remains true concerning believers that God “hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities” (Ps. 103: 10).

That is a marvelous word which is found in Numbers 23: 21, a word that has been of untold comfort to many of the saints—“He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath He seen perverseness in Israel.” These words were spoken by God through the mouth of Balaam, spoken of that very people who so frequently were wayward and filled with murmuring. Mark, the prophet does not say that iniquity and perverseness were not in Jacob. That would not give the believer confidence, which is the very thing God desires to give. It could never assure my poor heart to be told there was no sin in me for, alas I know too well there is. What I am to rest in is the wondrous fact that God sees no sin on me—that gives the conscience peace. God saw no perverseness and iniquity on Israel because He looked at them as under the Blood of the Lamb. And why is it that God sees no sin on believers? It is because “the Lord hath laid on Him (on Christ) the iniquities of us all” (Isa. 53: 6).

In view of this, what a walk ought to be ours. Surely we can do nothing now which would displease the One who has dealt so wondrously toward us. Surely we ought now to render a ready and joyful obedience to Him who has done so much for us. Surely we ought to abstain even from every appearance of evil. And yet that word “ought” condemns us, for it implies our failure. I would not say to one who was fulfilling his duty, You ought to do so and so. Should I say to any one, You ought to do this, the plain inference is that he is not doing it. How wondrous then, how heart-

affecting, is the patience of grace which bears with our failures, with our base ingratitude, with our Christ-dishonoring ways! And so we say again, it is difficult to determine which is the more amazing: whether the love which hath washed us from our sins, or the love which loves us "to the end" despite our unloveliness.

These are the reflections suggested by a review of Jacob's history. As we have followed the Holy Spirit's record of Jacob's life we have marvelled again and again at the matchless patience of God in His dealings with one so intractable and unworthy. Surely none but the "God of all grace" (1 Pet. 5:10) would have borne with such an one so long. Ah! such is equally true of the reader and of the writer. The only way in which it is possible to account for God's dealings with you and with me, these many years, is the fathomless and matchless grace of our God. Truly He is "long suffering to usward" (2 Pet. 3:9).

Not only is it affecting to trace the dealings of God through the changing scenes of Jacob's life, but it is also beautiful to mark the triumphs of Divine grace as these are exemplified in his closing days. The path of the just "shineth more and more unto the perfect day" (Prov. 4:18). And plainly is this manifested in the case of our patriarch. So feeble were the manifestations of the Divine life in Jacob in his early and middle life, so much did he walk in the energy of the flesh, that it is difficult to determine exactly when his spiritual life really began. But as he draws near the end of his earthly pilgrimage it becomes increasingly evident in him as in us that "though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day" (2 Cor. 4:16). The sunset of Jacob's life reveals the triumph of God's mighty grace and the marvelous transforming effects of His power which works upon material that seemed so unpromising. It is to some of the fruits of the Divine life in Jacob that we would now direct attention.

And what is it which produces these fruits? One answer to the question is found in Heb. 12—"My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him: For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth . . . Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised there-

by" (Heb. 12:5, 6, 11). Do not these scriptures furnish a key to the closing scenes in the life of our patriarch! How plainly we may discern God's chastening hand upon him. First there is the death of the faithful nurse Deborah (35:8), and this is followed almost immediately by the decease of his beloved Rachel (35:19), next we read that his eldest son "went and lay with Bilhah his father's concubine" (35:22), and then Isaac dies (35:29). Poor Jacob! sorrows came upon him thick and fast, but the hand of Divine chastisement is soon to fall still heavier. Jacob is touched now in his tenderest spot—Joseph, his favorite son, is taken from him, and mourned for as dead. This was indeed a severe blow, for we read "And Jacob rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days. And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted; and he said, For I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning. Thus his father wept for him" (Gen. 37:34-35).

How are these afflictions to be viewed? As marks of the Divine anger? As judgment from God? Surely not. Not so does God act toward His own. Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth. Even afflictions are among his love-gifts, sent in faithfulness, sent for our blessings, sent to exercise our hearts, sent to wean our affections from things of earth, sent to cast us more upon God that we may learn, experimentally, His sufficiency. The losses which Jacob suffered and the trials he was called upon to meet were among the "all things" which worked together for his good.

But not immediately did God's disciplinary dealings with our patriarch yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness—that comes "afterward" (Heb. 12:11). At first, we see only the resistance of the flesh. When Jacob's sons returned from Egypt Simeon was not with them, and what was worse, they informed their father that the lord of Egypt's granaries required them to bring Benjamin with them when they came back again. Listen to the petulant outburst from Jacob's lips when he hears these tidings, "And Jacob their father said unto them, Me have ye bereaved: Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away: all these things are against me" (42:36). Poor Jacob! He is looking at the things that are seen, rather than at the things unseen. He is walking by sight rather than by faith. It does not seem to have occurred to him that God might have a

wise purpose in all these events. He judged by 'feeble sense.' But ere undertaking to pass sentence upon Jacob let us remember that word in Rom. 2:1, "Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgeth: for wherein thou judgeth another, thou condemneth thyself; for thou that judgeth doest the same things."

Not long, however, does Jacob continue in such a state of mind. The next thing recorded of him reveals a better spirit: "And the famine was sore in the land. And it came to pass, when they had eaten up the corn which they had brought out of Egypt, their father said unto them, Go again, buy us a little food" (43:1-2). The relief which had been obtained by the first journey to Egypt of Jacob's sons and the corn they had brought back was soon exhausted. The famine was yet "sore in the land." Jacob bids his sons "Go again, buy us a little food." Does not this word "little" evidence the beneficent effects of God's disciplinary dealings with him? Unbelief and avarice would have wished for much food so as to hoard against a prolongation of the famine. But Jacob is contented with "little." No longer do we see him, as aforetime, selfish and greedy; instead, he is desirous that others, whose stores were running low, should have a part as well as himself; and, so far as the unknown future was concerned, he would trust God.

But now a difficulty presented itself. Jacob's sons could not go down to Egypt unless Benjamin accompanied them, and this was the last thing his father desired. A struggle ensued in the breast of our patriarch; the affections of the father are pitted against the calls of hunger. To allay Jacob's fears, Judah offers to stand as surety for his younger brother. And Jacob yielded, though not without a measure of reluctance. Yet, it is sweet to notice the manner in which the aged patriarch acquiesced. It was not the sullen consent of one that yielded to an inexorable fate when, in heart, he rebelled against it. No, he yielded in a manner worthy of a man of God. After arranging that every possible means should be employed to conciliate the lord of Egypt, he committed the whole issue to God.

"Take also your brother, and arise, go again unto the man: And God Almighty give you mercy before the man, that He may send away your other brother, and Benjamin: If I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved" (43:13, 14.) Note how Jacob speaks of God—"God Almighty," or

"God, the Sufficient One." This was the name under which Abraham was blessed (17: 1). This was the name used by Isaac in blessing Jacob, "God Almighty bless thee," etc., (28: 3). In using this name here, then, Jacob rests on the covenant promise and blessing, and thus we see that his prayer was a prayer of faith. Note further, his confidence in God's sovereign power, seen in his request that God would so move upon the man at the head of Egypt that he would be made willing to send Jacob's sons away. Finally, mark here his spirit of resignation—"If I be bereaved, I am bereaved."

Is it not lovely to mark the sequel. Jacob committed Benjamin into the hands of God, and he was returned safely to his father. When God deals with His saints He usually touches them in their tenderest parts. If there be one object around which the heart has entwined itself more than any other and which is likely to be God's rival, this it is of which we must be deprived. But if, when it is taken from us, we humbly resign it into God's hands, it is not unusual for Him to return it. Thus Abraham on giving up Isaac, received him again; so David, on giving himself up to God to do as seemed Him best, was preserved in the midst of peril; and so, in the present case of Benjamin, who later was returned to Jacob.

When Jacob's sons returned home they brought with them a strange tale—Joseph was yet alive, in fact governor over all the land of Egypt. Little wonder that at first Jacob refused to believe his sons, for the news seemed too good to be true. But we read "And they told him all the words of Joseph, which he had said unto them: and when he saw the wagons which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived. And Israel said, It is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive; I will go and see him before I die" (45: 27, 28). It is beautiful to note the change here from Jacob to Israel, especially as this is carried on into the next verse, "And Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to Beersheba, and offered sacrifices unto the God of his father Isaac" (46: 1). Thus, the first thing recorded of Jacob after his long journey to Egypt had begun, was the offering of sacrifices to God. Long years of discipline in the school of experience had, at last, taught him to put God first; ere he goes forward to see Joseph he tarries to worship the God of his father Isaac!

Beautiful, too, is it to note that here God met him for the seventh and last recorded time (see 28:13; 31:3; 32:1; 32:24; 35:1; 35:9), and said, "Jacob, Jacob. And he said, Here am I. And He said, I am God, the God of thy father; fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation. I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up again; and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes" (46:2-4).

Arrived in Egypt, restored to Joseph the aged patriarch is brought before Pharaoh: "And Joseph brought in Jacob his father, and set him before Pharaoh; and Jacob blessed Pharaoh" (47:7). The aged and feeble patriarch stands before the monarch of the mightiest empire of the world. And what dignity now marks Jacob! What a contrast from the day when he bowed himself seven times before Esau! There is no cringing and fawning here. Jacob carries himself as a child of God. He was a son of the King of kings, and ambassador of the Most High. Brief is the record, yet how much the words suggest when we remember that "the less is blessed of the better" (Heb. 7:7). Note, further, "And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, the days of the years of my pilgrimage are a hundred and thirty years" (49:7). At last Jacob has learned that his home is not here, that he is but a stranger and sojourner on earth. He sees now that life is but a journey, with a starting point and a goal—the starting point, regeneration; the goal, heavenly glory.

In Heb. 11:21 we read, "By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff." It is striking to observe that here the Holy Spirit passes by the feeble struggles of Jacob's faith and goes on to mention the brightness of its setting glory, as it beautified the closing scenes of this vessel of God's choice. Two distinct acts of Jacob are here singled out: the former is recorded in Gen. 48, the latter in Gen. 47:31. Into the probable reasons for this reversal of the historical order we cannot now enter, but a brief word concerning these two manifestations of faith will be in place.

"And the time drew nigh that Israel must die: and he called his son Joseph, and said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight, put, I pray thee, thy hand upon my thigh and deal kindly and truly with me: bury me not, I pray thee, in Egypt: But I will lie with my fathers, and thou shalt carry me out of Egypt, and bury me

in their burying place. And he said, I will do as thou hast said. And he said, Swear unto me. And he swore unto him. And Israel bowed himself on the top of his staff." It is exceedingly beautiful to notice this act of worship and what occasioned it. There is more here than meets the eye at first glance. This was no mere sentimental whim of the aged patriarch. God had promised, many years before, to give to Jacob and to his seed the land of Canaan, and now His promise is "embraced," Jacob had never possessed the land, and now he is about to die in a strange country. But he knows God's word cannot fail, and his faith looks forward to resurrection. At last the easily besetting sin (unbelief) is laid aside, and faith triumphs. Having secured from Joseph the assurance that he should not be buried in Egypt, but that his remains should be carried up out of Egypt and placed in the sepulchre of his fathers, Jacob "worshipped (bowing himself) on the top of his staff." It was a blessed exhibition of faith, and of his confidence in God, that He would do all that He had said and perform all that He had promised.

The second act of Jacob to which the Holy Spirit calls attention in Heb. 11 is recorded in Gen. 48. All through this chapter we may see how God was now in all Jacob's thoughts, and how His promises were the stay of his heart. He recounts to Joseph how God had appeared to him at Luz (v 3) and how He had promised to give the land of Canaan to him and his seed for an everlasting possession. He spoke of God as the One who "fed me all my life long unto this day" (v 15), and as the One "which redeemed me from all evil," which was only another way of acknowledging that "goodness and mercy" had "followed" him "all the days of his life."

Jacob was now about to die, and he wishes to bless the two sons of Joseph. Joseph had his own desires and wishes on this subject, and his desire was that Manasseh, the first-born, should receive the blessing. Accordingly, he placed Manasseh at Jacob's left hand and Ephraim at his right, so that Jacob's right hand might rest on the head of Manasseh and his left on Ephraim. But though Jacob's natural eyesight was dim, his spiritual discernment was not. Deliberately, Jacob crossed his hands "guiding his hands wittingly" (48: 14), or, as the Hebrew reads, literally, "he made his hands to understand." Note it is expressly said

that "Israel" did this: it was the new man that was acting, not the old man, "Jacob." And "by faith" he blessed both the sons of Joseph. Truly, it was not by sight or reason. What was more unlikely than that these two young Egyptian princes, for this is virtually what they were, should ever forsake Egypt, the land of their birth, and migrate to Canaan! How unlikely, too, that each should become a separate tribe. And how improbable that the younger should be exalted above the elder, both in importance and number, and should become "a multitude of peoples" (48:19). How impossible for him to foresee (by any human deduction) that long centuries afterwards Ephraim should become representative of the kingdom of "Israel," as distinct from "Judah." But he had heard God, rested on His word, and believed in the sure fulfilment of His promise. What a grand display of faith! Nature's eyes might be dim, but faith's vision was sharp: in his bodily weakness the strength of faith was perfected.

After blessing Joseph's sons, Jacob turns to their father and says, "Behold, I die: but God shall be with you, and bring you again unto the land of your fathers" (48:21). How utterly unlikely this appeared! Joseph was now thoroughly established and settled in Egypt. But no longer is Jacob walking by sight. Firm indeed was his confidence, and with an unshaken faith he grasps firmly the promises of God (that his seed should enter Canaan), and speaks out of a heart filled with assurance.

The final scene (portrayed in Gen. 49) presents a fitting climax, and demonstrates the power of God's grace. The whole family is gathered about the dying patriarch, and one by one he blesses them. All through his earlier and mid life, Jacob was occupied solely with himself; but at the end, he is occupied solely with others! In days gone by, he was mainly concerned with planning about things present; but now (see 49: 1), he has thought for nothing but things future! One word here is deeply instructive: "I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord" (49: 18). At the beginning of his life "waiting" was something quite foreign to his nature: instead of waiting for God to secure for him the promised birth right, he sought to obtain it for himself. And so it was, too, in the matter of his wages from Laban. But now the hardest lesson of all has been learned. Grace has now taught him how to wait. He who had begun a good

work in Jacob performed and completed it. In the end grace triumphed. At eveningtide it was light. May God deepen His work of grace in the writer and reader so that we may "lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and run with patience the race that is set before us" (Heb. 12: 1).

XXXVIII. JACOB'S PROPHECY: GENESIS 49

We have at last reached the closing scene in Jacob's life. Here and there we have beheld the light of heaven shining on and through our patriarch, but only too often the clouds of earth have obscured it. The struggle between the flesh and the spirit in him was fierce and protracted, but as the end drew near the triumphs of grace, and the faith which overcomes the world, were more and more manifest.

Nowhere is this more evident than in the scene presented to us in Genesis 49. Long years before, God had promised to give the land of Palestine to Abraham and his descendants. This promise had been confirmed to Isaac, and renewed to Jacob. But, up to this time, there had been no visible signs that the promise was about to be made good. Abraham and Isaac had been but "strangers and pilgrims" in Canaan, owing none of it save a burying-ground for their dead, and this they had purchased. Jacob, too, had "dwelt in tabernacles (tents) with Abraham and Isaac." (Hebrews 11: 9.) And now Jacob is dying—dying not in the promised land, but many miles away from it. In a strange country, in Egypt, our patriarch prepares to leave this earthly scene; but despite the feebleness of nature, the vigor of his faith was strikingly manifested.

Jacob summoned to his bedside each of his twelve sons, and proceeded to utter one of the most striking predictions to be found in all the Old Testament. Like most prophecies, this one of our dying patriarch has, at least, a double fulfillment. In its ultimate accomplishment it looks forward to the fortunes of the Twelve Tribes in "the last days" (Genesis 49: 1); that is, it contemplates their several conditions and positions as they will be in the End-time, namely, during the Seventieth Week of Daniel and on into the millennium (cf. Jeremiah 23: 19, 29; Isaiah 2: 2 for the "last days" of Israel). Concerning the final fulfillment of Jacob's prophecy we cannot now write; instead, we shall note how strikingly the past history of the descendants of Jacob's twelve sons has corresponded with their father's dying utterance:

"Gather yourselves together, and hear, ye sons of Jacob; and hearken unto Israel your father. Reuben, thou art

my first-born, my might, and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power. Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel, because thou wentest up to thy father's bed, then defilest thou it; he went up to my couch." (Genesis 49:2-4.) Three things are here said of Reuben: First, as the first-born son of Jacob, the place of "excellency," the position of dignity, was his natural birthright. Second, this position of preëminency had been forfeited through his sin in defiling his father's bed, and Jacob here foretells that the tribe which is to descend from Reuben "Shalt not excel." Third, Jacob also predicted that this tribe should be "unstable as water," which is a figurative expression taken from the passing away of water which had dried up like a summer stream. We shall now refer to several passages in the Old Testament which treat of Reuben, showing how the fortunes of this tribe verified the words of the dying patriarch.

Let us turn first to 1 Chronicles v: 1, 2: "Now the sons of Reuben, the first-born of Israel (for he was the first-born); but, for as much as he defiled his father's bed his birthright was given unto the sons of Joseph, the son of Israel; and the genealogy is not to be reckoned after the birthright. For Judah prevailed *above* his brethren, and of him (viz., of Judah, instead of Reuben as it ought to have been) came the Chief Ruler (*i. e.*, Christ); but the birthright was Joseph's." In this striking passage the "birthright" refers, of course, to the position of excellency, and this, as Jacob declared it should be, was taken away from Reuben and given to the sons of Joseph (they receiving the double or "first-born's" portion); and Judah, not Reuben, becoming the royal tribe from which Messiah sprang, and thus "prevailing" above his brethren. Verily, then, Reuben did not "excel."

Second, as we trace the fortunes of this tribe through the Old Testament it will be found that in nothing did they "excel." From this tribe came no judge, no king, and no prophet. This tribe (together with Gad) settled down on the wilderness side of the Jordan, saying, "Bring us not over Jordan." (Numbers 32:5.) From this same scripture it appears that the tribe of Reuben was, even then, but a cattle loving one—"now the children of Reuben and the children of Gad had a very great multitude of cattle; and when they saw the land of Jazer and the land of Gilead,

that, behold, the place was a place for cattle came and spoke unto Moses and Eleazar the priest saying.... the country which the Lord smote before the congregation of Israel, is a land for cattle, and thy servants have cattle. Wherefore, said they, if we have found grace in thy sight, let this land be given unto thy servants for a possession, and bring us not over Jordan." (Numbers 32: 1-5.) With this agrees Judges 5: 15, 16: "For the divisions of Reuben there were great thoughts of heart. Why abodest thou among the sheepfolds, to hear the bleatings of the flocks. For the divisions of Reuben there were great searchings of heart." When the land was divided among the tribes in the days of Joshua, the portion allotted to Reuben served, again, to fulfill the prophecy of Jacob—it was the southernmost and smallest on the east of Jordan.

Third, this tribe was to be "unstable as water," it was to dry up like a stream in summer; it was, in other words, to enjoy no numerical superiority. In harmony with this was the prophecy of Moses concerning Reuben—"Let Reuben live, and not die; and (or "but") let his men be few." Note, that at the first numbering of the tribes, Reuben had 46,500 men able to go forth to war (Numerical 1: 21), but when next they were numbered they showed a slight decrease—43,730. (Numbers 26: 7.) This is the more noteworthy because most of the other tribes registered an increase. Remark, too, that Reuben was among those who stood on Mt. Ebal to "curse," not among those who stood on Mt. Gerizim to "bless." (See Deuteronomy 27: 12, 13.) In 1 Chronicles 26: 31, 32, we read: "In the fortieth year of the reign of David they were sought for, and there were found among them mighty men of valor at Jazer of Gilead. And his brethren, men of valor, were two thousand and seven hundred chief fathers, whom king David made rulers over the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh, for every matter pertaining to God, and affairs of the king." It is also deeply significant to discover that when Jehovah commenced to inflict His judgments upon Israel we are told, "In those days the Lord began to cut Israel short; and Hazael smote them in all the coasts of Israel; from Jordan eastward, all the land of Gilead, the Gadites, and the Reubenites, and the Manassites, from Arser, which is by the River Arnon, even Gilead and Bashan." (2 Kings 10: 32, 33.) Thus it will be found

throughout; at no point did Reuben "excel"—his dignity and glory completely dried up!

"Simeon and Levi are brethren; instruments of cruelty are in their habitations. O my Soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honor, be not thou united; for in their anger they slew a man, and in their self-will they digged down a wall. Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel; I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel." (49: 5-7.) What a proof are these verses of the Divine Inspiration of the scriptures! Had Moses been left to himself he surely would have left out this portion of Jacob's prophecy, seeing that he was himself a descendant of the tribe of Levi!

Simeon and Levi are here linked together and are termed "instruments of cruelty." The historic reference is, no doubt, to Genesis 34: 25, where we read: "And it came to pass on the third day, when they were sore, that two of the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brethren, took each man his sword, and came upon the city boldly, and slew all the males." It would seem from the fact that Simeon's name is here mentioned first that he was the leader in that wickedness. It is not unlikely that Simeon was also the one who took the lead in the conspiracy to get rid of Joseph, for Simeon was the one whom Joseph "bound" (Genesis 42: 24) ere he sent his brethren back to Jacob. It is highly interesting to notice how that the later references to this tribe correspond in character with what we know of their ancestor. For example: When Judah went up to secure his portion in Canaan, he called upon Simeon to help him (Judges 1: 3), as if summoning to his aid the men who possessed the old fierceness of their progenitor. "And Judah said unto Simeon his brother, Come up with me into my lot, that we may fight against the Canaanites; and I likewise will go with thee into thy lot—so Simeon went with him." And so again, we read in 1 Chronicles 4: 42, 43: "And some of them, even of the sons of Simeon, five hundred men, went to Mount Seir, having for their captains Pelatiah, and Neariah, and Rephaiah, and Uzziel, the sons of Ishi. And they smote the rest of the Amalekites that were escaped, and dwelt there unto this day."

Concerning Levi it is interesting to note that when Moses came down from the mount and saw Israel worshipping the calf, that when he said, "Who is on the Lord's side?" we

read, "All the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him, and he said unto them, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbor. And the Children of Levi did according to the word of Moses: and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men." (Exodus 32: 27, 28.) Beautiful is it, also, to learn how similar devotion to the Lord and boldness in acting for Him cancelled Jacob's "curse" and secured Jehovah's blessing. In Numbers 25: 6-13 we are told: "And, behold, one of the Children of Israel came and brought unto his brethren a Midianitish woman in the sight of Moses, and in the sight of all the congregation of the Children of Israel, who were weeping before the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And when Phineas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw it, he rose up from among the congregation, and took a javelin in his hand; and went after the man of Israel into the tent, and thrust both of them through, the man of Israel, and the woman through her belly. So the plague was stayed from the Children of Israel. And those that died in the plague were twenty and four thousand. And the Lord spoke unto Moses, saying, Phineas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, hath turned My wrath away from the Children of Israel, while he was zealous for My sake among them, that I consumed not the Children of Israel in My jealousy. Wherefore say, behold, I give unto him my covenant of peace; and he shall have it, and his seed after him, even the covenant of an everlasting priesthood, because he was zealous for his God, and made an atonement for the Children of Israel." Thus the "curse" on Levi was revoked. Levi was first joined to Simeon in cruelty, but after, he was joined to the Lord in grace!

That which is most prominent, however, in Jacob's prophecy concerning the tribes of Simeon and Levi is that they were to be "divided" and "scattered" in Israel. (See 49: 7.) And most literally and remarkably was this fulfilled. When the land was divided in the days of Joshua, we learn that Simeon received not a separate territory in Canaan, but obtained his portion within the allotment of Judah (see Joshua 19: 1-8): thus the Simeonites were necessarily "scattered," being dispersed among the cities of

Judah. So it was with the Levites also; their portion was the forty-eight cities which were scattered throughout the inheritance of the other tribes. (See Numbers 35: 8; Joshua 14: 4, and Joshua 21.) Thus, while each of the other tribes had a separate portion which enabled them to be congregated together, the descendants of Simeon and Levi were "divided" and "scattered." Exactly as Jacob had, centuries before, declared they should be!

"Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise; thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy father's children shall bow down before thee. Judah is a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up? The sceptre shall not depart from Judah nor a law-giver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto Him shall the gathering of the people be. Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes: His eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk." (49: 8-12.)

This part of Jacob's prophecy concerning Judah finds its ultimate fulfillment in Christ. With it should be coupled 1 Chronicles 5:2: "Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him is the Chief Ruler," a, "Prince"; the Hebrew word here is "Nagid" and is the same term which is translated "Messiah the Prince" in Daniel 9: 24. It was from this tribe our Lord came. Returning now to the words of Jacob.

First, we are told of Judah: "Through art he whom thy brethren shall praise." The word here for "praise" is always used of praise or worship which is offered to God! Christ is the One who shall yet receive the praise and worship of His "brethren" according to the flesh, namely, Israel. Second, of Judah, Jacob said, "Thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy father's children shall bow down before thee." (Genesis 49: 8.) So, again, Christ is the One who shall yet have dominion over Israel and subdue their enemies. This dominion of the tribe of Judah commenced in the days of David, who was the first king from that tribe; and it was during his reign that Judah's hand was "in the neck of" their "enemies." Third, the destinies of the tribe of Judah is here contemplated under the figure of a "lion," which at once reminds us of Revela-

tion 5: 5, where the Lord Jesus is expressly denominated "The Lion of the Tribe of Judah."

In dealing with the destinies of the tribe of Judah under the figure of a "lion," it is to be observed that this tribe's history is contemplated under three distinct stages, according to the growth or age of the lion. First, we have "a lion's whelp," then "a lion," lastly "an old lion"—the gradual growth in power of this tribe being here set forth. We would suggest that this looks at the tribe of Judah first from the days of Joshua up to the time of Saul; then we have the full grown lion in the days of the fierce warrior David; lastly, from Solomon's reign and onwards we have the "old lion."

"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah; nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto Him shall the gathering of the people be." (49: 10.) This calls for a separate word. The Hebrew term for "sceptre" here is translated "tribe" in verses 16 and 28 of this same chapter—according to its usage in scripture it signifies the tribal-rod or staff of office which belonged to any tribe and was the ensign of authority. This part of Jacob's prophecy, then, intimated that the tribal-rod should not depart from Judah until a certain eminent Personage had come; in other words, that Judah should retain both its tribal distinctness and separate authority until Shiloh, the Messiah, had appeared. And most remarkably was this prophecy fulfilled. The separate Kingdom of Israel (the Ten Tribes) was destroyed at an early date, but Judah was still in the land when Messiah came.

It is further to be noted that Jacob declared of Judah that there should not depart from this tribe "a lawgiver until Shiloh." It is a striking fact that after Shiloh had come the legal authority vested in this tribe disappeared, as is evident from John 18:31: "Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye Him, and judge Him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him: It is not lawful for *us* to put any man to death." What a remarkable confession this was! It was an admission that they were no longer their own governors, but instead, under the dominion of a foreign power. He that has the power to condemn an offender to death is the governor or "lawgiver" of a country. It is "not lawful for us" said Caiaphas and his associates—you, the Roman governor, alone, can pass sentence

of death on Jesus of Nazareth. By their own admission Genesis 49: 10 had received its fulfillment. No longer had they a "lawgiver" of their own stock! By their "words" they were "condemned." (Matthew 12: 37.) The "sceptre" had departed, the "lawgiver" had disappeared, therefore—Shiloh must have come.

"Unto Him shall the gathering of the people be" looks forward to Christ's second coming, as also do the words that follow: "Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes. His eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk." (Genesis 49: 11, 12.) The reference here seems to be a double one: first to the tribe of Judah, second to Christ Himself. Judah's portion in the land was the vine-growing district in the South. (See 2 Chronicles 26: 9, 10.) Note, too, in Song of Solomon 1: 14 that we read of "the vineyards of Engedi" and in Joshua 25: 62 we learn that "Engedi" was one of the cities of Judah; note further Joshua 15: 55 that "Carmel was also included in Judah's portion. The application of Genesis 49: 11, 12, to our Lord may be seen by comparing Isaiah 63: 1-3: "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? This that is glorious in His apparel, traveling in the greatness of His strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art Thou red in Thine apparel, and Thy garments like Him that treadeth in the winefat?—compare above 'he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes'—I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with Me: for I will tread them in Mine anger, and trample them in My fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments."

"Zebulun shall dwell at the haven of the sea; and he shall be for a haven of ships; and his border shall be unto Zidon." (Genesis 49: 13.) In blessing his children Jacob here passes from his fourth to his tenth son. Why should he do this? Everything in scripture is perfect. Not only is its every word Divinely inspired, but the very arrangement of its words also evidences the handiwork of the Holy Spirit. God is a God of order, and every diligent student discovers this everywhere in His word. When blessing his fourth son we found that the words of our dying patriarch manifestly looked forward to Christ Himself, who, accord-

ing to the flesh, sprang from this tribe of Judah. Hence, because of the close connection of our Lord with the land of Zebulun during the days of His earthly sojourn, these two tribes are here placed in juxtaposition. Having spoken of the tribe of which our Lord was *born*, we have next mentioned the tribe in whose territory He *lived* for thirty years. This is, we believe, the main reason why the tenth son of Jacob is placed immediately after the fourth.

The part played by the tribe of Zebulun in the history of the nation of Israel was not a conspicuous one, but though referred to but rarely as a tribe, each time they do come before us it is in a highly honorable connection. First, we read of them in Judges 5, where Deborah celebrates in song Israel's victory over Jabin and Sisera, and recounts the parts taken by the different tribes. Of Zebulun and Naphtali she says, "*Zebulun and Naphtali were a people that jeopardized their lives unto the death in the high places of the field.*" (Verses 18.) Again, in 1 Chronicles 12, where we have enumerated those who "Came to David to Hebron, to turn the kingdom of Saul to him" (verse 33), concerning Zebulun we read, "*Of Zebulun, such as went forth to battle, expert in war, with all instruments of war, fifty thousand, which could keep rank, they were not of double heart.*" And again, in this same chapter, "Moreover they that were nigh them, even unto Issachar *and Zebulun* and Naphtali, brought bread on asses, and on camels, and on mules, and on oxen, and meat, meal, cakes of raisins, and wine, and oil, and oxen, and sheep abundantly: for there was joy in Israel." (1 Chronicles 12: 40.)

Jacob's prophecy concerning the tribe, which was to spring from his tenth son, referred, mainly, to the *position* they were to occupy in the land of Canaan, and also to the *character* of the people themselves. Moses' prophecy concerning the twelve tribes, recorded in Deuteronomy 33, is very similar to that of Jacob's with respect to Zebulun: "And of Zebulun he said, Rejoice, Zebulun, in thy going out (*i. e.*, to sea); and, Issachar, in thy tents. They shall call the people unto *the* mountain (*i. e.*, Zion); there they shall offer sacrifices of righteousness: for they shall suck of the abundance of *the seas*, and of treasures hid in the sand." (Verses 18, 19.)

The character of Zebulun as here outlined by Jacob is very different from that of Judah, who is pictured as dwell-

ing, more or less, apart from the other tribes—as a lion “*gone up from the prey* ;” very different, too, from Issachar, here referred to as an ass crouching down in lazy sloth. (See verses 14, 15.) Zebulun was to be a commercial and seafaring tribe. When Jacob said of Zebulun, “his border shall be unto Zidion,” which was in Phœnicia, he implied that it would take part in Phœnician commerce.

The portion which fell to the tribe of Zebulun (Joshua 19:19, 11), together with that of the tribe of Naphtali which joined theirs, became known as “Galilee of the Gentiles.” (See Matthew 4: 15.) These Galileans were to be an energetic, enterprising people, who were to mingle freely with the nations. The prophecy of Moses concerning Zebulun, to which we have already referred, clearly establishes this fact (see Deuteronomy 33: 18, 19), and, plainly looked forward to New Testament times, when the men of Galilee took such a prominent part as the first heralds of the Cross. Note that Moses said, “*Rejoice Zebulun, in thy going out.*” Is it not remarkable that no less than eleven out of the twelve apostles of Christ were men of *Galilee*—Judas alone being an exception! How beautiful are the next prophetic words of Moses in this connection: “They shall call the people unto the mountain: there they shall offer sacrifices of righteousness!” (Deuteronomy 33: 19.)

One other word concerning Jacob’s prophecy about Zebulun. Of this tribe he said, “He shall be *for a haven of ships.*” Galilee was to provide a refuge, a harbor, a place where the storm-tossed ships might anchor at rest. And here it was that Joseph and Mary, with the Christ Child, found a “haven” after their return from Egypt! Here it was the Lord Jesus dwelt until the beginning of His public ministry. And note, too, John 12: 1, “After these things Jesus walked in *Galilee*: for He would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill Him.” Galilee was still a “*haven*” to Him!

“Issachar is a strong ass couching down between two burdens: And he saw that rest was good, and the land that it was pleasant; and he bowed his shoulder to bear, and became a servant unto tribute.” (Gen. 49: 14, 15.) Upon these verses the writer has but little light. It is difficult to determine the precise force and significance of the several statements that Jacob made here concerning his fifth son; nor is it easy to trace the fulfilment of them in the record of

the tribe which sprang from him. One thing is clear, however: to compare a man (or a tribe) to an "ass" is, today, a figure of reproach, but it was not so in Jacob's time. In Israel, the ass was not looked upon with contempt; instead, it was an honorable animal. Not only was it a useful beast of burden, but people of rank rode on them. (See Judg. 10:4; 12:14.) Until the days of Solomon Israel had no horses, being forbidden by Jehovah to rear them (see Deut. 17:16); but asses were as common and as useful among them as horses are now among us. The "ass" was a reminder to Israel that they were a peculiar (separated) people, whose trust was to be in the Lord and not in horses and chariots, which were the confidence of the other nations of antiquity.

"Issachar is termed by Jacob a "strong ass," and the fulfilment of this portion of Jacob's prophecy is clearly discovered in the subsequent history of this tribe. In Numbers 26, where we have recorded the second numbering of those among the tribes which were able to go forth to war, we find that only Judah and Dan out of the twelve tribes were numerically stronger than Issachar, and Dan had but one hundred fighting men more than Issachar. Again, in the days of the Kings, the tribe of Issachar had become stronger still, for while in Numbers 26:25, we read that the number of their men able to go forth to war were 64,300, in 1 Chronicles 7:5 we are told, "And the brethren among all the families of Issachar were valiant men of might, reckoned in all by the genealogies 87,000!"

XXXIX. JACOB'S PROPHECY, CONTINUED.
GENESIS 49

“Dan shall judge his people, as one of the tribes of Israel. Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path, that biteth the horse’s heels, so that his rider shall fall backward. I have waited for Thy salvation, O Lord.” (Gen. 49:16-18.) With this prophecy of Jacob concerning the tribe of Dan should be compared that of Moses, recorded in Deuteronomy 33:22, “And of Dan he said, Dan is a lion’s whelp: he shall leap from Bashan.” It is to be seen that both predicted *evil* of that tribe, around which there seems to be a cloud of mystery.

The first thing that Scripture records of Dan is his low birth. (See Gen. 30:1-6.) Next, he is brought before us in Genesis 37:2, though he is not there directly mentioned by name. It is highly significant that of the four sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, *Dan* was the oldest, being at that time twenty years of age, and so, most likely, the *ringleader* in the “evil” which Joseph reported to their father. Next, in Genesis 46, reference is made to the children of Jacob’s sons: the descendants of Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and the others, being specifically named in order. But when *Dan* is reached, the names of *his* sons are not given; instead, they are simply called by the tribal name—Hushim or Shuham. (See 46:23.) This is the more striking, because in Numbers 26 we meet with the same thing again: the children born to each of Jacob’s twelve sons are carefully enumerated until Dan is reached, and then, as in Genesis 46, *his descendants are not named*, simply the tribal title being given. (See Num. 26:42.) This concealment of the names of Dan’s children is the first indication of that silent “blotting out” of his name, which meets us in *the total omission* of this tribe from the genealogies recorded in 1 Chronicles 2 to 10, as well as in Revelation 7, where, again, no mention is made of any being “sealed” out of the tribe of Dan. There seems to have been an unwillingness on the part of the Holy Spirit to even mention *this tribe* by name. In cases where the names of all the tribes are given, Dan is generally far down, often last of all, in the list. For example, we read in Numbers 10:25, “And the standard of the camp of the children

of Dan set forward, which was *the rearward of all the camps* throughout their hosts." Again, Dan was *the last* of the tribes to receive his inheritance when Joshua divided up the land—"This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Dan according to their families, these cities with their villages. When they had *made an end* of dividing the land for inheritance by their coasts, the children of Israel gave an inheritance to Joshua." (Josh. 19:47-49.) Note again that in 1 Chronicles 27:16-22, where all the tribes are referred to, Dan is mentioned *last*!

Putting together the several prophecies of Jacob and Moses we find two traits met in Dan—*treachery* "a serpent by the way, an adder in the path"; and *cruelty*: "Dan is a lion's whelp; he shall leap from Bashan." In Judges 18 the Holy Spirit has recorded at length how these predictions received their first fulfilment. The attack of this tribe on Laish was serpentine in its cunning and lionlike in its cruel execution. Then it was that Dan leaped from Bashan, and from the slopes of Mount Hermon (which was in the territory of this tribe) like a young lion and like an adder springing on its prey. From Judges 18:30 we learn that Dan was the first of the tribes to fall into Idolatry. Apparently they remained in this awful condition right until the days of Jeroboam, for we find that when this apostate king set up his two golden calves, saying, "Behold thy gods, O Israel," he set up one in Bethel and "the other put he *in Dan*." (1 Ki. 12:28, 29.) And, as late as the time of Jehu these two golden calves were still standing, and it is a significant and solemn fact that though there was a great reformation in his day, so that the prophets and worshippers of Baal were slain and the images were burned and the house of Baal was broken down, yet we are told, "Howbeit, from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, Jehu departed not from after them, to wit, the golden calves that were in Bethel, and that were in *Dan*." (2 Ki. 10:29.)

One other item in Jacob's prophecy concerning this tribe remains to be noticed—"Dan shall *judge* his people." This received a partial fulfilment in the days of Samson—though we doubt not that its final fulfilment awaits the time of the great tribulation. Joshua 19:41 informs us that among the towns allotted to this tribe were Zorah and Eshtaol. Compare with this Judges 13:2, which tells us that the par-

ents of Samson belonged to the tribe of Dan and had their home in Zorah. How remarkably the prophecies of Jacob and Moses combined in the person of Samson (one of Israel's "judges") is apparent on the surface. Serpent-like methods and the lion's strength characterized each step in his strange career. How Samson "bit," as it were, "the horse's heels" in his death!

It is to be noted that after Jacob had completed his prophecy concerning Dan, and ere he took up the next tribe, that he said, "I have waited for Thy salvation, O Lord." (Gen. 49:18.) This is very striking and significant, coming in just where it does. Having spoken of Dan as "*a serpent by the way*," the Holy Spirit seems to have brought to his mind the words spoken by God to that old Serpent the Devil, recorded in Genesis 3:15. The eye of the dying patriarch looks beyond the "Serpent" to the one who shall yet "bruise his head," and therefore does he say, "I have waited for *Thy salvation*, O Lord." No doubt these very words will yet be appropriated in a coming day by the godly remnant among the Jews. If, as it has been generally held by prophetic students, both ancient and modern, both among Jews and Gentiles, that the Anti-Christ will spring from this tribe of Dan, the ancient prophecy of Jacob concerning the descendants of this son will then receive its final fulfilment. Then, in a supreme manner, will Dan (in the person of the Anti-Christ) "*judge*" and rule over "his people," *i. e.*, Israel; then, will *Dan* be a "serpent in the way" and "an adder in the path," then will he treacherously and cruelly "bite the horse's heels." And then, too, will that faithful company, who refuse to worship the Beast or receive his "mark," cry, "I have *waited* for Thy salvation, O Lord!"

"Gad, a troop shall overcome him: but he shall overcome at the last." (Gen. 49:19.) The Hebrew word for troop here signifies a marauding or plundering troop. The cognate to this word is rendered "companies" in 2 Kings 5:2—"And the Syrians had gone out by *companies*, and had brought away *captive* out of the land of Israel a little maid." The same word is translated "bands" in 2 Kings 24:2—"And the Lord sent against him *bands* of the Chaldees, and *bands* of the Syrians, and *bands* of the Moabites, and *bands* of the children of Ammon, and sent them against Judah to *destroy* it, according to the Word of the Lord,

which He spake by His servants, the prophets." When, therefore, Jacob said of this tribe, "Gad, a troop shall overcome him, but he shall overcome at the last," the reference seems to be to alternate defeat and victory. This tribe was to be in a constant state of warfare, leading like the Bedouin Arabs a wandering, wild, and unsettled existence. One wonders whether the (slangy) expression "Gad about" may not have its origin in the character of this tribe."

We may notice, once more, how closely parallel with this prediction of Jacob is the prophecy of Moses concerning this tribe: "And of Gad he said, Blessed be he that enlargeth Gad: he dwelleth as a lion, and teareth the arm with the crown of the head. And he provided the first part for himself, because there, in a portion of the lawgiver, was he seated." (Deut. 33: 20, 21.) The first part of this prophecy emphasizes the unsettled and warlike character of Gad. The second statement that Gad "provided the first part (of the inheritance) for himself," has reference to the fact that this tribe sought and obtained as their portion the land on the east side of the Jordan, and this *before* Canaan was divided among the tribes in the days of Joshua. This portion of Gad's became known as "the land of Gilead." (See Deut. 3: 12-15.) Note, further, that Moses said, "Blessed be he that *enlargeth* Gad." The fulfilment of this may be seen by a reference to 1 Chronicles 5: 16, where we read that the children of Gad dwelt in "all the suburbs of Sharon." Note that in Joshua 13: 24-28 no mention is made of *Sharon*: their border was thus "enlarged!"

The position that Gad occupied was a precarious one. Being cut off from that of the other tribes, they were more or less isolated. They were open, constantly, to the attacks from the desert bands or troops, such as the Ammonites and Midianites, and consequently, they lived in a continual state of warfare. Jacob's words were being repeatedly fulfilled. Gad suffered severely from their lack of faith and enterprise in asking for the territory they did. Their choice was almost as bad as Lot's, and proved as disastrous, for they were among the first tribes that were carried into captivity. (See 1 Chron. 5: 26.)

For particular illustrations of the fulfilment of Jacob's prophecy we may note the following: "And it came to pass in process of time, that the children of Ammon made war against Israel." Note now, the portion of Israel which

they assailed: "And it was so, that when the children of Ammon made war against Israel, the elders of *Gilead* went to fetch Jephthah out of the land of Tob: and they said unto Jephthah, Come, and be our captain, that *we* may fight with the children of Ammon. . . . Then Jephthah went with the elders of *Gilead*, and the people made him captain over them: and Jephthah uttered all his words before the Lord in Mizpah. And Jephthah sent messengers unto the king of the children of Ammon, saying, What hast thou to do with me, that thou art come against me to fight in *my* land? (Judg. 11:4-6, 11, 12.) "Then Nahash the Ammonite came up, and encamped against *Jabesh-gilead*: and all the men of Jabesh said unto Nahash, Make a covenant with us, and we will serve thee." (1 Sam. 11:1.) But in the End-time Gad "shall overcome." It is to this, we believe, that Jeremiah 49:1-2, refers: "Concerning the Ammonites thus saith the Lord; hath Israel no sons? hath he no heir? why then doth their king inherit Gad, and his people dwell in his cities? Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will cause an alarm of war to be heard in Rabbah of the Ammonites; and it shall be a desolate heap, and her daughters shall be burned with fire: *then* shall Israel be heir unto them that were his heirs, said the Lord." And again in Zephaniah 2:8-9, "I have heard the reproach of Moab, and the revilings of the children of Ammon, whereby they have reproached My people, and magnified themselves against their border. Therefore, as I live, saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Surely Moab shall be as Sodom, and the children of Ammon as Gomorrah, even the breeding of nettles and salt pits, and a perpetual desolation: the residue of My people shall spoil them, and the remnant of My people *shall possess them*."

"Out of Asher his bread shall be fat, and he shall yield royal dainties" (Gen. 49:20). Asher's descendants, in common with the tribes of Zebulun, Naphtali and Issachar, were settled in the northern part of Palestine, which was called by the general name of "Galilee of the Gentiles," which name was perfectly appropriate to Asher, for from first to last this was a half Gentile tribe. Asher's territory lay in the extreme north of Palestine between Mount Lebanon and the Mediterranean Sea, and included within its borders the celebrated cities of Tyre and Sidon (See Josh. 19:24-31). The portion of this tribe was better known by

its Grecian name of Phœnicia, which means "land of the palms," so designated because of the luxuriant palms which abounded there. It was to this land, preëminently rich and beautiful, Jacob's prediction looked.

"Out of Asher his bread shall be fat, and *he shall yield ROYAL dainties.*" Let us turn now to a few Scriptures which furnish illustrations of the repeated fulfillment of Jacob's prophecy.

"And Hiram, king of Tyre, sent messengers to *David*, and cedar trees and carpenters and masons, and *they built David a house*" (2 Sam. 5:11). This city of Tyre was, as pointed out above, within the territory of the tribe of Asher (Josh. 19:29), and here we learn how the *king* of Tyre yielded or provided "royal dainties" by furnishing both material and workmen for building a house for king David.

We behold a repetition of this in the days of Solomon. In 1 Kings 5 we read: "And Hiram, king of Tyre, sent his servants unto Solomon, for he had heard that they had anointed him king in the room of his father: for Hiram was ever a lover of David. And Solomon sent to Hiram, saying, Thou knowest how that David, my father, could not build a house unto the name of the Lord his God, for the wars which were about him on every side, until the Lord put them under the soles of his feet. But now the Lord my God hath given me rest on every side, so that there is neither adversary nor evil occurrent. And, behold, I purpose to build a house unto the name of the Lord my God, as the Lord spake unto David, my father, saying, Thy son, whom I will set upon thy throne in thy room, he shall build a house unto my name. Now, therefore, command thou that they hew me cedar trees out of Lebanon; and my servants shall be with thy servants; and unto thee will I give hire for thy servants according to all that thou shalt appoint: for thou knowest that there is not among us any that can skill to hew timbers like unto the Sidonians. And it came to pass, when Hiram heard the words of Solomon, that he rejoiced greatly, and said, Blessed be the Lord this day, which hath given unto David a wise son over this great people. And Hiram sent to Solomon, saying, I have considered the things which thou sentest to me for: and I will do all thy desire concerning timber of cedar, and concerning timber of fir. My servants shall bring them down from Lebanon unto the sea, and I will convey them by sea in

floats unto the place that thou shalt appoint me, and will cause them to be discharged there, and thou shalt receive them: and thou shalt accomplish my desire, in giving food for my household. *So Hiram gave Solomon cedar trees and fir trees according to all his desire*" (verses 1-10). Thus again do we see how Asher "yielded royal dainties."

Jacob also said: "Out of Asher his *bread* shall be fat." Is it not striking to discover that in the time of famine in the days of Elijah that God sent his prophet to the widow in Zarephath, saying: "Behold, I have commanded a widow woman *there to sustain thee*" (1 Ki. 17:9). Note Zarephath was in Sidon (see Lu. 4:26) and Sidon was in *Asher's* territory (Josh. 19:28).

In 2 Chronicles 30, we have another illustration, along a different line, of how Asher yielded "*royal dainties.*" It was at the time of a great religious revival in Israel. King Hezekiah "sent to all Israel and Judah, and wrote letters also to Ephraim and Manasseh, that they should come to the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, *to keep the passover unto the Lord God of Israel*" (verse 1). Then we are told, "So the posts passed from city to city, through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh, even unto Zebulun: *but they laughed them to scorn, and mocked them*" (verse 10). But in marked and blessed contrast from this we read: "Nevertheless, divers of *Asher* and Manasseh and of Zebulun *humiliated themselves, and came to Jerusalem*" (verse 11).

The New Testament supplies us with two more illustrations. In Luke 2 we learn of how one who belonged to this Tribe of Asher yielded a most blessed "dainty" to Israel's new-born King, even the Lord Jesus. For when His parents brought the Child Jesus into the Temple, following the beautiful Song of Simeon, we read, "And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the Tribe of *Asher*; she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity. And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the Temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. And she coming in that instant *gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of Him* to all that looked for redemption in Jerusalem" (Lu. 2:36-38).

Finally, note in Acts 27 we are told that when the apostle Paul was being carried prisoner to Rome, that when the ship

reached *Sidon* (which was in the borders of Asher) that "Julius courteously entreated Paul, and gave him liberty to go unto his friends to *refresh* himself" (verse 3). Thus, once more, do we read of "bread" out of Asher.

"Naphtali is a hind let loose: he giveth goodly words" (Gen. 49:21). The word Naphtali means "wrestling" (see Gen. 30:8). "Naphtali is a hind let loose"; it was as though Jacob said, Naphtali is as a deer caught in the toils of the hunters, hemmed in by them, but by his struggles she escapes from their snares. Naphtali would be a hind "let loose." This expression has a double meaning. In the Hebrew the word signifies, first, "sent" or "sent forth," just as a stag driven from its covert goes forth, scattering her pursuers. But the word also means "let loose" or "let go." It is the term used of Noah when he "sent forth" the raven and the dove from the ark; as also of the priest, when at the cleansing of the leper, he let go or let loose the living bird. The word expresses the joy of an animal which has been made captive and, in its recovered liberty, bounds forth in gladness, just as we have often seen a dog jumping for joy after it has been unchained. Jacob, then, pictures Naphtali rejoicing as a freed hind. Then he foretells the joy which the Tribe shall express after its escape—"goodly words" he shall give forth. After it regains its liberty, the Tribe shall sing a Song of Praise.

The striking fulfillment of this prediction by our dying patriarch is seen in the victory of Barak, the great hero of this Tribe (see Judg. 4:6), who, sent forth as a hind from its cover in the mountains of Galilee, came down Mount Tabor to face on foot the hosts of Sisera with his nine hundred chariots of iron. Barak, like a hind let loose, was at first timid of responding to Deborah's call. He had not dared to go forth with his little handful of men unless Deborah had sent for him and assured him of success. Read through Judges 4, and note the *hindlike swiftness* of his onslaught down the slopes of Tabor. It is significant that the name "Barak" means "lightning," and, like lightning he burst as a storm on the startled hosts of Sisera, which were scattered by the hand of God at his unexpected approach. (Note Judg. 4:14.) "So Barak went down from Mount Tabor, and ten thousand men *after* him," not "with him"—he running ahead of all!

The battle was not of Barak's choosing, rather was it forced upon him by Deborah. He was literally "sent forth" into the valley. (Note "sent" in Judges 5: 15.) In the heights of Tabor, Barak and his men were beyond the reach of Sisera's cavalry and chariots. But down in the valley, on foot, they would be like a herd of defenseless deer, unarmed, without either spear or shield, for attack or defense. (See Judg 5: 8.) In the defenselessness of Naphtali—deserted by their brethren (see 5: 15-18)—hemmed in by the hosts of the Canaanites, they were indeed a picture of helplessness. Nevertheless, the hand of the oppressor was broken. God interposed, and Naphtali was "*set free*," and the exuberance of their consequent joy found expression in the Song of Deborah and Barak recorded in Judges 5. *There* were the "goodly words" which Jacob had foretold. Thus Naphtali was a hind "let loose" in the *double* sense—"sent forth" by Deborah and "set free" from the yoke of the Canaanites by God!

But if this Tribe is interesting to us from its Old Testament association, it has far deeper interest for us from its New Testament connections. Zebulun and Naphtali were closely linked together, yet each had a separate interest. The land of Zebulun provided a "haven" of rest for the Lord Jesus during the first thirty years that He tabernacled among men; but it was in the bounds of Naphtali in the cities of Capernaum, Bethsaida, Chorazin, and other places, that He went about doing good and ministering the Word of Life. In His preaching of the Gospel to the poor were the "goodly words" of which Jacob spoke!

"Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall: The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him. But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob (from thence is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel); even by the God of thy father, who shall help thee; and by the Almighty, who shall bless thee with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lieth under, blessings of the breasts and of the womb. The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills: they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren" (Gen. 49: 22-26).

These words of Jacob concerning Joseph are to be divided into two parts: what is said in verses 22 to 24 is mainly retrospective; what is recorded in verses 25, 26 is prospective. This appears from the change of tense: in the first part the verbs are in the past tense, in the second part they are in the future. As Jacob reviews the past he mentions three things in connection with his favorite son. Verse 22 seems to view Joseph as a youth in his father's house, as an object of beauty, of tender care, and as well pleasing to his father's heart—all pictures under the beautiful figure of a "fruitful bough by a well." Next, Jacob refers to the bitter enmity and fierce hatred which were directed against him—the archers sorely grieved him; they shot at him their cruel arrows, they vented upon him their unreasonable spite. But through it all Joseph was Divinely sustained. The arms of the Eternal God were beneath him, and the Angel of the Lord encamped round about him. "His hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob."

Some have experienced difficulty with the wording of verse 24; even the translators do not appear to have been clear upon it. Inserting the word "is" in italics the verse as it stands in the Authorized Version reads as though it were a prediction concerning Christ. But many other plain Scriptures show that this is a mistake. The Messiah was not "from" the Tribe of Joseph, but came of the Tribe of Judah, just as Messianic prophecy declared He should. The little word "is" in italics should be omitted, and the verse punctuated thus—"His hands were made strong by the hands of the Mighty (One) of Jacob, from thence—the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel." It was "from *thence*," i. e., from the Shepherd and Stone of Israel, came all of Joseph's strength and blessing.

The prominent feature about this prophecy concerning Joseph is *fruitfulness*, and this received its fulfilment in the *double* Tribe which sprang from him—Ephraim and Manasseh, like two branches out of the parent stem. Joseph received a double portion in the land, viz., the firstborn's "birthright," this being transferred to him from Reuben. (See 1 Chron. 5:1, 2.) So, too, shall it be in the Millennium. Concerning the coming Kingdom, of which Ezekiel's closing chapters treat, we read: "Thus saith the Lord God, This shall be the border, whereby ye shall inherit the land

according to the twelve tribes of Israel: *Joseph shall have two portions*" (Ez. 47:13). It is noteworthy that "Ephraim" means "*fruitfulness*," and of Manasseh Jacob had predicted, "Let them grow into a *multitude* in the midst of the earth." Finally, it should be pointed out that Joshua was from one of the tribes which sprang from Joseph (Num. 13:8), and in him Jacob's prophecy concerning his favorite son received its main fulfilment.

"Benjamin shall *raven* as a wolf: in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil" (Gen. 49:27). What a striking evidence is this of the complete setting aside of the natural man by God! Surely it is clear that had Jacob followed the inclinations of his heart he would not have said *this* of Benjamin, his youngest and dearly loved son! But this divine prediction was unmistakably fulfilled as the Scriptures which bear upon this tribe plainly show.

Benjamin is here likened to a "wolf," which is noted for its swiftness and *ferocity*. Benjamin was the fiercest and most warlike of the tribes. For illustrations, note the following passages; Judges 19, and mark verse 16; 2 Sam. 2:15, 16: "Then there arose and went over by number, twelve of Benjamin, which pertained to Ish-bosheth, the son of Saul, and twelve of the servants of David. And they caught every one his fellow by the head, and thrust his sword in his fellow's side; so they fell down together." (See also 1 Chron. 8:40; 12:2; 2 Chron. 17:17.)

The heroes of this tribe were marked by fierceness and wolf-like treachery. *Ehud* was of this tribe. (Read Judg. 3:15-22.) *King Saul* was a Benjaminite. (Read 1 Sam. 22:17-20.) Mark the *wolf* seizing the helpless sheep as recorded in 2 Samuel 4:1-6. *Saul of Tarsus*, who first persecuted the Church, was also of this Tribe (Rom. 11:1).

In closing our study of this remarkable prophecy from the dying Jacob, let us mark how everything good which he severally predicted of his sons finds its realization *in the Lord Jesus*.

1. The prophecy concerning Reuben (Gen. 44:3) reminds us of the Excellency and Dignity of Christ's person: He is the "Firstborn," in whom is "the excellency of dignity and the excellency of power."

2. The prophecy concerning Simeon and Levi (49:5-7) may well speak to us of Christ on the Cross: then it was

that "instruments of cruelty" were used against Him; Jacob says: "O my soul, come not thou into their secret"—he would have nothing to do with them: so on the Cross, Christ was forsaken by God and man; a "curse" is here pronounced by Jacob upon them, as Christ, on the Cross, was "made a Curse for us."

3. The prophecy concerning Simeon and *Levi* anticipated our Lord's *Priesthood*, for Levi became the priestly Tribe.

4. The prophecy concerning Judah (49:8-12) pictures our Lord's Kingship.

5. The prophecy concerning Zebulun (49:13) looks at Christ as the great Refuge and Haven of Rest.

6. The prophecy concerning Issachar (49:14, 15) prefigures His lowly Service.

7. The prophecy concerning Dan (49:16-18) views Him as the Judge.

8. The prophecy concerning Gad (49:19) announces His triumphant Resurrection.

9. The prophecy concerning Asher (49:20) looks at Him as the Bread of Life, the One who satisfies the hearts of His own.

10. The prophecy concerning Naphtali (49:21) regards Him as God's perfect Prophet, giving forth "goodly words."

11. The prophecy concerning Joseph (49:22-26) forecasts His Millennial reign.

12. The prophecy concerning Benjamin (49:27) depicts Him as the terrible Warrior (Cf. Isa. 63:1-3).

XL. JOSEPH AS A YOUTH. GENESIS 37

In the first of our articles upon Jacob we called attention to the fact that each of the great Israelitish patriarchs illustrated some basic spiritual truth and that the chronological order of their lives agrees with the doctrinal order of truth. In Abraham we have illustrated the doctrine of *election*, for he was singled out by God from all the heathen and chosen to be the head of the Jewish nation. In Isaac we have foreshadowed the doctrine of *Divine sonship*: Abram's firstborn, Ishmael, represents the man born after the flesh, the old nature; but Isaac, born by the miraculous power of God, tells of the new man, the spiritual nature. In Jacob we see exemplified *the conflict* between the two natures in the believer, and also God's gracious *discipline* which issued, slowly but surely, in the triumph of the spirit over the flesh. Joseph, typically, speaks to us of *heirship* preceded by "suffering," and points forward to the time when the sons and heirs shall *reign* together with Christ. There is thus a beautiful moral order in the several leading truths illustrated and personified by these men. And it should be observed that here, as in everything which pertains to God's Word, its *orderliness* evidences its Divine Authorship; everything is in its proper place.

Joseph, then, speaks of *heirship* and, as another has beautifully expressed it, "And consistently with this, in Joseph, we get *suffering* before glories. * * * For while discipline attaches to us as children, sufferings go before us as heirs; and this gives us the distinction between Jacob and Joseph. It is discipline we see in Jacob, discipline leading him as a child, under the hand of the Father of his spirit, to a participation of God's holiness. It is sufferings, martyr-sufferings, sufferings for righteousness, we see in Joseph, marking his path to glories. And this is the crowning thing! and thus it comes as the closing thing, in this wondrous book of Genesis—after this manner perfect in its structure, as it is truthful in its records. One moral after another is studied, one secret after another is revealed, in the artless family scenes which constitute its materials, and in them we learn our calling, the sources and the issues of

our history, from our election to our inheritance'' (Mr. J. G. Bellett).

Joseph is the last of the saints which occupies a prominent position in Genesis. In all there are *seven*—Adam, Abel, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph. More space is devoted to the last of these seven than to any of the others. There are several reasons for this which appear on the surface. In the first place, the history of Joseph is the chief link which connects Exodus with Genesis; the earlier chapters of Exodus being unintelligible without the last ten chapters of Genesis. It is Joseph's life which explains the remarkable development of the Hebrews from a mere handful of wandering shepherds to a numerous and settled colony in Egypt. But no doubt the chief reason why the life of Joseph is described with such fulness of detail is because almost everything in it typified something in connection with *Christ*. But more of this later.

“Joseph was the elder son of Rachel (30:24). Of his early life nothing is recorded. He could not have been more than five or six years old when his father left Mesopotamia. He was therefore the child of Jacob's later life, and escaped all the sad experiences associated with the earlier years at Haran. He comes before us in this chapter (Gen. 37) at the age of seventeen. His companions were his half-brothers, the grown-up sons of Bilhah and Zilpah. From all that we have hitherto seen of them they must have been utterly unfit companions for such a youth. Jacob's elder sons had, naturally, been affected by the life in Haran, by the jealousy at home, and by the scheming between Laban and Jacob. They had been brought up under the influence of the old Jacob, while Joseph had been the companion of the changed Jacob or ‘Israel.’ There are few people more unfitted for influence over younger brothers than elder brothers of bad character.” (Dr. G. Thomas.)

“These are the generations of Jacob. Joseph being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren; and the lad was with the sons of Bilhah, and with the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives: and Joseph brought unto his father their evil report. Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age: and he made him a coat of many colors. And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren,

they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him'' (37: 2-4).

There are perhaps few portions of Holy Writ with which we are more familiar than the one now before us. From earliest childhood many of us have listened to this beautiful but pathetic narrative. The aged patriarch, his favorite son, the coat of many colors, Joseph's dreams, the envious brothers, their wicked conduct—all so true to life—have been indelibly impressed upon our memories since we first learned them on our mother's knee, or from the lips of our Sunday School teacher. Many are the lessons which may be drawn, and pointed are the warnings which are found here. But we shall pass from these to something deeper and even more precious.

As we read thoughtfully the books of the Old Testament our study of them is but superficial if they fail to show us that in divers ways and by various means God was preparing the way for *the coming of His Son*. The central purpose in the Divine Incarnation, the great outstanding object in the life and death of the Lord Jesus, were prefigured beforehand, and ought to have been rendered familiar to the minds of men. Among the means thus used of God was the history of different persons through whom the life and character of Christ were to a remarkable degree made manifest beforehand. Thus Adam represented His Headship, Abel His Death, Noah His Work in providing a refuge for His people. Melchizedek pointed to Him as priest, Moses as prophet, David as King. But the fullest and most striking of all these typical personage was Joseph, for between his history and that of Christ we may trace fully a *hundred* points of analogy! Others before us have written upon this captivating theme, and from their writings we shall draw freely in the course of these papers on the typical significance of Joseph's history.*

In the verses quoted above from Genesis 37 there are seven points in which Joseph prefigured Christ, each of which is worthy of our attention, namely, the meaning of his name, the nature of his occupation, his opposition to evil, his father's love, his relation to his father's age, his coat of many colors, and the hatred of his brethren. Let us consider each of these in turn:

*We take this occasion to acknowledge our indebtedness to Dr. Haldeman and Mr. C. Knapp.

1. *The Meaning of his Name.* It is most significant that our patriarch had *two* names—Joseph, and Zaphnath-paaneah (41:45) which the rabbins translate “Revealer of secrets.” This latter name was given to him by Pharaoh in acknowledgment of the Divine wisdom which was in him. Thus, Joseph may be said to be his *human* name and Zaphnath-paaneah his *Divine* name. So, also, the one whom Joseph foreshadowed has a double name—“Jesus” being His *human* name, “Christ” signifying “the Anointed” of *God*, or, again, we have his double name in “Son of Man” which speaks of His humanity, and “Son of God” which tells of His Deity. Let us note how the *meaning* of Joseph’s names were typical in their significance.

“Joseph” means *adding* (see 30:24). The first Adam was the great *subtractor*, the last Adam is the great *Adder*: through the one, men became *lost*; by the other, all who believe are *saved*. Christ is the One who “adds” to Heaven’s inhabitants. It was to this end that He came to this earth, tabernacled among men for more than thirty years, and then died on the Cross: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit” (Jno. 12:24). The ultimate result of His Death will be “much fruit,” and at His return this will be gathered into the Heavenly garner (Jno. 14:3).

But Joseph’s second name means “Revealer of secrets.” This was a most appropriate name. Revealer of secrets Joseph ever was, not merely as an interpreter of dreams, but in every scene of his life, in every relation he sustained—when with his brethren in Potiphar’s household, in prison, or before Pharaoh—his words and his works ever *tested* those with whom he had to do, making manifest their secret condition. How strikingly this foreshadowed Christ, of whom it was said in the days of His infancy, “Behold this Child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against * * * that the thoughts of many hearts *may be revealed*” (Lu. 2:34, 35).

In the incident now before us Joseph is seen as the Revealer of secrets in a double way. First, he revealed his father’s heart, for he is here seen as the special object on which Jacob’s affections were centered. Second, he revealed the hearts of his brethren by making manifest their wicked

“hatred.” In like manner, our blessed Saviour revealed the Father’s heart, “No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, *He hath declared Him*” (Jno. 1:18). And in like manner, the Lord Jesus also revealed what was in the hearts of men. One of the most striking and prominent features presented in the four Gospels is the fact that everywhere He went the Lord Jesus *exposed* all. He made manifest the secret condition of all with whom He came into contact. He was truly “the *Light* of the world,” shining in “a dark place”—detecting, displaying, uncovering, bringing to light the hidden things of darkness. Well, then, was Joseph named the one who *added*, and the one that *revealed*.

2. *By Occupation Joseph was a Shepherd*, “feeding the flock.” This is one of the prominent lines which is found running through several of the Old Testament typical personages. Abel, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, David, were each of them “shepherds,” and a close study of what is recorded of each one in this particular relation will reveal that each pointed forward to some separate and distinctive aspect of our Lord’s Shepherdhood. No figure of Christ is more beautiful than this: our favorite Psalm (the twenty-third) presents Him in this character. One of our earliest conceptions of the Saviour, as children, was as the Good Shepherd. The figure suggests His watchful care, His unwearied devotion, His tender solicitude, His blessed patience, His protecting grace, His matchless love in giving His life for the sheep. Above, Joseph is seen “feeding the flock,” pointing to the earthly ministry of Christ who, sent unto “the lost sheep of the House of Israel,” spent Himself in tending the needs of others.

3. *His Opposition to Evil*. “And Joseph brought unto his father their evil report.” It is truly pathetic to find how this action of Joseph has been made an occasion for debate, some arguing that in doing what he did Joseph acted wrongly; others defending him. But it is not as a tale bearer that Joseph is here viewed, rather is he seen as the *truth-speaker*. Not by cowardly silence would he be the accomplice of their evil-doing. And here too we may discern a clear foreshadowing of the Lord Jesus Christ. We will quote but one verse, but it is sufficient to establish the type: “The world cannot hate you; but Me it hateth, be-

cause *I testify of it that the works thereof are evil*" (Jno. 7:7).

4. *His Father's Love.* "Israel loved Joseph more than all his brethren." This is one of the lines which stands out most distinctly in this lovely Old Testament picture. How Jacob loved Joseph! His mark of special esteem in making for him the coat of many colors: his unconsolable grief when he believed that Joseph had been devoured by beasts; his taking of that long journey into Egypt that he might again look upon his favorite son ere death overtook him—all tell out the deep love of Jacob for Joseph. And how all this speaks to us of *the Father's love* for His only begotten Son! Through Solomon the Spirit of prophecy, speaking of the relation which existed between the Father and the Son in a past eternity, said, "The Lord possessed Me in the beginning of His way before His works of old;" and again, "Then I was by Him, as One brought up with Him, and I was daily *His delight*, rejoicing always before Him" (Prov. 8:22, 30). How sweetly was this illustrated by Jacob's love for Joseph! Again, when the Son of God became incarnate, and was about to begin His public ministry, the heavens were opened and the Voice of the Father was heard saying, "This is My *beloved Son*, in whom I am well pleased" (Mat. 3:17). So, also, when His public ministry neared its close, once more the Father's Voice was heard, upon the Mount of Transfiguration, saying, "This is My *beloved Son*, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him" (Mat. 17:5). The Son, too, affirmed the Father's love for Himself—"Therefore doth My Father *love me*, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again" (Jno. 10:17). And when the Son had finished the Work given Him to do, when He had laid down His life and had risen again from the dead, the Father displayed His love by removing Him from the scenes of His sufferings and shame, "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name" (Phil. 2:9). And not only did God highly exalt His blessed Son, but He also seated Him upon *His own* throne (Rev. 3:21), that during these centuries when the Church is being built *Christ might be near to the Father!*

5. *His Relation to his father's Age.* "He was the son of his old age." No line in this picture is without its own meaning—how could it be, when none other than the Spirit

of God drew it! Every word here is profoundly significant. We quote from the words of another: "Old age, translated into spiritual language and applied to God, signifies 'eternity.' Jesus Christ was the Son of God's eternity. From all eternity He was God's Son. He was not derived, He was eternally begotten; He is God of God, very God of very God, equal with, and of the same substance as, the Father." As the opening verse of John's Gospel declares, "*In the beginning* was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God." And again, in His high-priestly prayer the Lord Jesus said, "And now, O Father, glorify thou Me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee *before the world was*" (Jno. 17:5). The Lord Jesus Christ is no creature, He is Creator (Jno. 1:3); He is no mere emanation of Deity, He is the One in whom dwelleth "all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2:9). He is far more than a manifestation of God, He is Himself "God manifest in the flesh" (1 Tim. 3:16). He is not a person who had His beginning in time, but is Eternal in His being; as the true rendering of Micah 5:2 declares, the One who was born in Bethlehem of Judea was none other than He "whose goings forth have been from of old, *from the days of Eternity*." Christ then was, in the language of our type "the Son of (His Father's) old age"—the *eternal* Son of God.

6. *His Coat of Many Colors.* Thus far the interpreting of the type has been simple, but here, we encounter that which is not quite so easy. How gracious of God for providing us with help on this point! We are not left to our own imaginations to *guess* at the meaning of the many colored coat. No; guesswork is not only vain, but altogether needless in regard to God's blessed Word. Scripture is *its own interpreter*. In Judges 5:30, we read, "Have they not sped? have they not divided the prey; to every man a damsel or two; to Sisera a prey of *divers colors*, a prey of *divers colors* of needlework, of *divers colors* on both sides, *meet for* the necks of them that take the spoil?" Here we learn that such garments were to be worn as a *mark of distinction*. Again in 2 Samuel 13:18 we read, "And she had a garment of *divers colors* upon her: for with *such* robes were *the King's daughters* that were virgins apparelled." Here again we get the same thought: This was the attire of unmarried princesses; it was a mark of honor, singling out

the wearer as one of noble birth. This, no doubt, was Jacob's object to distinguish Joseph (born of Rachel) from his half brothers (born of the slave-wives).

How appropriate was this as an adumbration of Christ! He, too, was marked off from all His brethren according to the flesh, marked off as one of noble birth, marked off by outward signs of peculiar distinction and honor. It is blessed to behold what care and pains God took to manifest this coat of many colors, in connection with His blessed Son. The "virgin's" Babe was distinguished from all others born by the Angelic Song o'er Bethlehem's plains—none other was ever welcomed thus by the Heavenly hosts! So, too, the "star" that appeared to the wise men gave evidence of the Heavenly Origin of the new-born King. At His baptism we see again the many-colored coat: multitudes presented themselves to John at the river Jordan and were baptized of him; but when the Christ of God came up out of the waters, the Heavens were opened and the Spirit of God descended upon Him in the form of a dove, thus distinguishing Christ from all others! Behold again the coat of many colors in John 12. In John 13 the feet of the disciples (pointing to their walk) are defiled, and need to be washed with water (type of Word); but in the previous chapter (for in all things Christ must have the preëminence) we see the feet of our blessed Lord, not washed with water (for there was no defilement in Him), but *anointed with precious ointment*, the fragrance of which filled the house, telling that the walk of Him (as well as His blessed person) was a sweet smelling savor to the Father. Thus again was Christ distinguished from and elevated above all others. So, too, at the Cross, the distinguishing coat of many colors may be seen. In death, as everywhere, His uniqueness was manifested. He died as none other ever died or could: He "laid down His life." And the uniqueness of His death was divinely attested in the supernatural phenomena that accompanied it: the three hours darkness, the quaking of the earth, and the rending of the veil. The "*many colors*" of the coat also speak to us of Christ's varied glories and infinite perfections.

7. *The Hatred of his Brethren.* "They hated him and could not speak peaceably to him." It was Jacob's love which brought out the heart's enmity of these men. Joseph then, made manifest both his father's love and his breth-

ren's hatred. So when Christ came to the earth He did these two things. He revealed the Father's heart and He exposed man's enmity. And one of two things always followed: either men hated Him for exposing them, or they accepted such exposure and took refuge in the Grace which He revealed. When Christ exposed the hypocrisy of the Pharisees they hated Him; but when He exposed to the woman at the well her sinful life and condition, she welcomed it, and availed herself of God's grace. So it is now: those who hear the truth of God faithfully preached, the lost and guilty condition of the natural man fearlessly proclaimed, either they hate it, and seek to hide behind the filthy rags of their own self-righteousness, or they come out into the light, bow to God's verdict, and casting themselves in the dust before Him as Hell-deserving sinners, believe in the Saviour which the Gospel makes known. In which class are *you* found, dear reader? Are you, like the brethren of Joseph who hated the son of the father's love, "despising and rejecting" Christ? Friend, make no mistake here. You either *love* or you *hate* the Lord Jesus Christ! and it is written, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ *let him be accursed*" (1 Cor. 16:22). O heed now this solemn admonition of God, "Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that *put their trust in Him*" (Ps. 2:12).

Before we turn to consider the special subject of this article we must first notice three or four points in the first eleven verses of Genesis 37 which, through lack of space, we omitted from our last.

"And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it his brethren: and they hated him yet the more. And he said unto them, Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed: For, behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves stood around about, and made obeisance to my sheaf. And his brethren said to him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words. And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me. And he told it to his father, and to

his brethren: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What is this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth? And his brethren envied him; but his father observed the saying" (verses 5-11). Continuing our numeration we may note:

8. *Joseph is hated because of his Words.* There are two lines which are, perhaps, made more prominent than others in this first typical picture: the *love* of Jacob for his son, and the *hatred* of the brethren. Three times over within the compass of these few verses reference is made to the "hatred" of Joseph's brethren. In verse 4 we read, "they *hated* him, and could not speak peaceably unto him." Again, in verse 5 we are told, "and they *hated* him yet the more." And again in verse 8: "And they *hated* him yet the more for his dreams and for his words." It will be seen from these references there was a twofold occasion for their wicked enmity. First, they hated Joseph's *person*, because of Jacob's special love for him; second, they hated him because of "*his words*." They hated him because of what he *was*, and also because of what he *said*. Thus it was, too, with the One whom Joseph typified.

As we turn to the four Gospels it will be found that those who were our Lord's brethren according to the flesh *hated Him* in this same twofold way. They hated Him because He was the beloved Son of the Father, and they also hated Him because of His teaching. As illustrations of the former we may note the following passages: "Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill Him, because He not only had broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God" (Jno. 5:18). "The Jews then murmured at Him, because He said, I am the Bread which came down from heaven" (Jno. 6:41). "I and My Father are one. *Then* the Jews took up stones again to stone Him" (Jno. 10:30, 31). Such was their wicked hostility against His person. And it was just the same, too, in regard to His *teaching*: "And all they in the synagogue when they *heard* these things, were filled with wrath, and rose up and thrust Him out of the city, and led Him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast Him down headlong" (Lu. 4:28, 29). "The world cannot hate you; but *Me* it hateth, because *I* testify of it, that the works thereof are evil" (Jno. 7:7). "But now ye seek to kill Me,

a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God" (Jno. 8:40).

9. *Joseph was to enjoy a remarkable future.* These dreams of Joseph intimated that this favored son of Jacob was the subject of high destinies: they were Divine announcements of his future exaltation. There can be little doubt that Jacob and his sons perceived that these dreams were prophetic, otherwise the brethren would have regarded them as "idle tales," instead of being angered by them. Note, too, that "his father observed the saying" (verse 11).

So, too, of the Antitype. A remarkable future was promised to the One who first appeared in lowliness and shame. Concerning the Child that was to be born unto Israel, the Son given, it was pre-announced: "The government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end" (Isa. 9:6, 7). To his mother the angel declared, "Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call His name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David; and He shall reign over the House of Jacob for ever: and of His kingdom there shall be no end" (Lu. 1:31-33). That Joseph's Antitype was to enjoy a remarkable future was thus intimated beforehand.

10. *Joseph foretold his future Sovereignty.* It is worthy of notice that the two recorded dreams of Joseph contemplated a *double* sovereignty: the first dream concerned "the field," which pointed to the *earthly* dominion of our Lord; but the second dream was occupied with the sun, the moon and the stars, and tells, in type, of the *Heavenly* dominion of Christ, for all power (or authority) has been given to Him in heaven and on earth.

Joseph's announcement of his future exaltation only served to fan the fires of enmity, and gave intensity to his brethren's hatred. And so it was with the Saviour. The more our Lord unfolded the glory of His person, the more He spoke of His future exaltation, the more did the Jews—His brethren according to the flesh—hate Him. The climax of this is to be seen in Matthew 26:64: "Nevertheless, I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of

heaven.” Here was the announcement of His future sovereignty, and mark the immediate effects of His words on those that heard Him: “*Then* the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath *spoken blasphemy*.”

11. *Joseph was envied by his brethren*. “When his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, they hated him” (verse 4). In these words are found the key to what followed. That which was the prime cause of the brethren’s hatred was envy: as verse 11 tells us, “And his brethren envied him.” They were jealous of the partiality shown by Jacob to their half-brother. This is a sin which has characterized human nature all down the ages: the difference between envy and covetousness is this—we envy *persons*, we covet things.

Here, too the type holds good. Christ was “envied” by those who were His brethren, according to the flesh. This comes out in His parable of the Wicked Husbandman, “Having yet therefore one son, His well-beloved, He sent Him also last unto them, saying, They will reverence My Son. But those husbandmen said among themselves, This is the Heir; come, let us kill Him, and the inheritance shall be ours” (Mk. 12: 6, 7). Again, “For this cause the people also met Him, for that they heard that He had done this miracle. The Pharisees *therefore* said among themselves, Perceive ye how *ye* prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone *after Him*” (Jno. 12: 18, 19). How that utterance manifested the jealousy of their hearts! But even plainer is the testimony of Matthew 27: 17, 18, for there the very word “envy” is found, “Therefore when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ? For he knew that *for envy* they had delivered Him.” In our next we shall consider, Joseph betrayed by his brethren.

XLI. JOSEPH BETRAYED BY HIS BRETHREN. GENESIS 37.

“And his brethren went to feed their father’s flock in Shechem. And Israel said unto Joseph, Do not thy brethren feed the flock in Shechem? Come, I will send thee unto them. And he said to him, Here am I” (37: 12, 13).

12. *Joseph sent forth by his father.* The verses just quoted above introduce to us the second of these marvelous typical scenes in which Joseph shadows forth the Lord Jesus. Here the brethren of Joseph are seen *away from* their father. Jacob says to his beloved son, “Come, and I will send thee unto them.” How this reveals the heart of Jacob to us. He was not indifferent to their welfare. Absent from the father’s house as they were, Jacob is concerned for the welfare of these brethren of Joseph. He, therefore, proposes to send his well beloved son on an errand of mercy, seeking their good. And is it not beautiful to mark the *promptness* of Joseph’s response! There was no hesitancy, no unwillingness, no proffering of excuses, but a blessed readiness to do his father’s will, “Here am I.”

One cannot read of what passed here between Jacob and Joseph without seeing that behind the historical narrative we are carried back to a point before time began, into the eternal counsels of the Godhead, and that we are permitted to learn something of what passed between the Father and the Son in the remote past. As the Lord God with Divine omniscience foresaw the fall of man, and the alienation of the race from Himself, out of the marvelous grace of His heart, He proposed that His beloved Son should go forth on a mission of mercy, seeking those who were away from the Father’s House. Hence we read so often of the Son being *sent* by the Father, “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and *sent His Son* to be the propitiation for our sins” (1 Jno. 4: 10). And blessed it is to know that the Beloved of the Father came forth on His errand of love, freely, willingly, gladly. Like Joseph, He, too, promptly responded, “Here am I.” As it is written of Him in Hebrew 10: 7, “Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of Me) *to do Thy will*, O God.”

13. *Joseph seeks the welfare of his brethren.* "And he said to him, Go, I pray thee, see whether it be well with thy brethren, and well with the flocks, and bring me word again" (37:14). Joseph could not have been ignorant of his brethren's "envy"; he must have known how they "hated" him; and in view of this, one had not been surprised to find him unwilling to depart on such a thankless errand. But with gracious magnanimity and filial fear he stood ready to depart on the proposed mission.

Two things are to be particularly observed here as bringing out the striking accuracy of this type: First, Joseph is sent forth with a definite object before him—to seek his brethren. When we turn to the Gospels we find the correspondence is perfect. When the Beloved of the Father visited this world, His earthly mission was restricted to His brethren according to the flesh. As we read in John 1:11, "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not": His "own" here refers to His own people, the Jews. Again, in Matt. 15:24, it is recorded that the Lord Jesus Himself expressly declared, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the House of Israel." And again, in Rom. 15:8, we are told, "Now I say that Jesus Christ was a Minister of the Circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers."

In the second place, observe *the character* of Joseph's mission: *said Jacob*, "Go, I pray thee, see whether it be *well* with thy brethren." He was sent not to censure them, but to inquire after their welfare. So, again, it was with the Lord Jesus Christ. As we read in John 3:17, "For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved."

14. *Joseph was sent forth from the vale of Hebron:* "So he sent him out of the vale of Hebron, and he came to Shechem" (37:14). There is no line in this lovely picture, drawn by the Spirit of God, which is without its own distinctive significance. We quote here from the well chosen words of Mr. C. Knapp: "Hebron means fellowship or communion. The vale suggests quiet peacefulness and rest. It was intended, I believe, to point them forward (and point *us* back) to the fellowship of the Son with the Father in heaven's eternal calm and peace previous to His entrance, at His incarnation, into this scene of sin and toil and sorrow" (A Fruitful Bough),

The peaceful vale of Hebron, then, was the place where Joseph dwelt in happy fellowship with his father; there he was at home, known, loved, understood. But from this he was sent to a place characterized by strife and blood-shedding, unto those who appreciated him not, yea, to those who envied and hated him. Faintly but accurately this tells of the love-passing-knowledge which caused the Lord of Glory to leave His Home above and descend to a hostile realm where they hated Him without a cause.

15. *Joseph came to Shechem* (37:14). The word "Shechem" means "Shoulder," being taken from "the position of the place on the 'saddle' or 'shoulder' of the heights which divide the waters there that flow to the Mediterranean on the west and to the Jordan on the east" (Smith's Bible Dictionary). The meaning of this name conforms strictly to the Antitype. The "shoulder" speaks of burden-bearing and suggests the thought of service and subjection. The moral meaning of the term is Divinely defined for us in this very book of Genesis—"and bowed his shoulder to bear and become a servant unto tribute" (49:15). How striking it is to read, then, that on leaving his father in the vale of Hebron, Joseph came to Shechem. How marvelously this foreshadowed *the place* which the Lord of Glory took! Leaving His peaceful place on high, and coming down to this scene of sin and suffering. He took the *Servant's* place, the place of submission and subjection. As we read in Phil. 2:6, 7, "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant." And again in Gal. 4:4, "When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, *made under the law.*" Verily, "Shechem" was the place that the Beloved of the Father came to.

Moreover, is it not significant that Shechem has been mentioned before in the Genesis narrative—see 34:25-30—especially when we note what occurred there. Shechem was the place of sin and sorrow, of evil passions and blood-shedding. Little wonder that Jacob was anxious about his sons in *such* a place, and that he sent Joseph to them *there* to inquire after their welfare. And how what we read of in Gen. 34 well depicts in terse but solemn summary the history of this earth. How aptly and how accurately the scene there portrayed exhibited the character of the place

into which the Lord Jesus came. The place which He took was that of the Servant; the scene into which He came was one of sin and strife and suffering.

16. *Joseph now became a Wanderer in the field.* "And a certain man found him, and, behold, he was wandering in the field: and the man asked him: saying, What seekest thou? And he said, I seek my brethren: tell me, I pray thee, where they feed their flocks" (37:15, 16). In His interpretation of the Parable of the Tares, the Lord Jesus said, "the field is *the world*" (Matt. 13:38). Like Joseph, the Beloved of the Father became a *Wanderer*, a homeless Stranger in this world. The foxes had holes, and the birds of the air had their nests, but the Son of man had not where to lay his head. What a touching word is that in John's Gospel, "And every man went unto his own house: Jesus went unto the Mount of Olives" (John 7:53; 8:1). Every other man had his own house to which he could go, but the Lord Jesus, the homeless Wanderer here, must retire to the bleak mountain side. O my soul, bow in wonderment before that matchless grace which causes thy Saviour who, though He was rich, yet He for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich!

17. *Joseph seeks until he finds his brethren.* "And the man said, They are departed hence; for I heard them say, Let us go to Dothan. And Joseph went after his brethren and found them in Dothan" (37:17). When Joseph arrived at Shechem he found his brethren gone; they were not there. "Now is his chance to return to Hebron if his heart is not wholly in his mission. Here he has given him a good excuse for turning back and giving up the undertaking. But no; he has no thought of turning back, or giving up the work given him of his father to do" (Mr. K.). Thus it was with that blessed One whom Joseph foreshadowed. From start to finish we find Him prompted by unswerving devotion to His Father and unwearied love toward His lost sheep, continuing the painful search until He found them. No seeming failure in His mission, no lack of appreciation in those to whom He ministered, daunted Him. Man might despise and reject Him, those nearest might deem Him "beside Himself"; Peter might cry, "Spare Thyself," yet none of these things turned Him aside from going about His Father's business! A work had been given Him to do, and He would not rest till it was "finished."

“And Joseph went after his brethren.” How these words gather up into a brief sentence the whole story recorded in the four Gospels! As the Redeemer went about from place to place, one end only was in view—He was going after His brethren. He enters the synagogue and reads from the prophet Isaiah, and with what object? That His brethren might be reached. He walks by the Sea of Galilee, seeking out those who should walk with Him for a season. He must needs go through Samaria we read; and why? Because there were some of His “brethren” in that place. Yes, the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost. And, my Christian reader, of what do these words remind *you*, “Joseph *went after* his brethren?” Ah, how patiently and untiringly that One of whom Joseph was but a type “went after” *you*! How many years His unwearied love pursued you; pursued you over the mountains of unbelief and across the precipices of sin! All praise to His marvelous grace.

“And found them in Dothan.” Dr. Haldeman tells us that “Dothan” signifies “Law or Custom.” “And it was there Jesus found His brethren, dwelling under the bondage of the Law, and slaves to mere religious formalism.” Yes, the Law of Jehovah had degenerated into the “customs” of the Pharisees. “Laying aside the commandments of God, ye hold the traditions of men” (Mark 9:8), was our Lord’s charge against them.

18. *Joseph conspired against.* “And when they saw him afar off, even before he came near unto them, they conspired against him to slay him” (37:18). The hatred of the brethren found opportunity in the love that sought them. It is striking to notice how that a conspiracy was formed against Joseph “before he drew near unto them.” How this reminds us of what happened during the days of our Saviour’s infancy. No sooner was He born into this world than the enmity of the carnal mind against God displayed itself! A horrible “conspiracy” was hatched by Herod in the attempt to slay the newly born Saviour. This was in the days when He was “afar off.” Thirty years before He presented Himself publicly to the Jews. The same thing is found again and again during the days of His public ministry. “Then the Pharisees went out and held a council against Him, how they might destroy Him” (Matt. 12:14), may be cited as a sample.

19. *Joseph's words disbelieved.* "And they said one to another, Behold this dreamer cometh. Come now, therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit, and we will say, Some evil beast hath devoured him; and we shall see what will become of his dreams" (37:19, 20). The prophetic announcement of Joseph seemed unto his brethren as idle tales. They not only hated him, but they refused to believe what he had said. Their scepticism comes out plainly in the wicked proposal, "Let us slay him . . . and we shall see what will become of his dreams." Thus it was with the Christ of God. After He had been nailed to the cross, "they that passed by reviled Him, wagging their heads, and saying, Thou that destroyed the temple and buildest it in three days, save Thyself. *If* Thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. Likewise, also the chief priests mocking Him, with the scribes and elders, said, He saved others; Himself He cannot save. *If* He be the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, *And we will believe Him*"—which was an admission that they *did not* believe. The Jews believed Him not. His teaching was nothing more to them than empty dreams. So, too, after His death and burial. "The chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while He was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. Command therefore, that the sepulchre be made sure" (Matt. 27). When the stone was sealed and the watch was set, the sceptical Pharisees were but saying in effect, "We shall see what will become of His dreams."

And is it any different now in modern Christendom? How do men and women today treat the words of the Faithful and True Witness? Do those who listen to the Gospel give credence to what they hear? Do they set to their seal that God is true? Do they *really* believe as true the Lord's own words, "He that believeth not is condemned already" (John 3:18)? Ah, unsaved reader, dost thou believe *that*, that even now the condemnation of a Holy God is resting upon thee? You do not have to wait until the last great day; you do not have to wait until the judgment of the great white throne. No; God's condemnation rest upon thee now. Unspeakably solemn is this. And there is but one way of deliverance. There was but one way of escape for Noah and his family from the flood, and that was to seek

refuge in the Ark. And there is but one way of escape from God's condemnation for you, and that is, to flee to Christ, who was Himself condemned in the stead of all who believe on Him. Again: He who was truth incarnate declared, "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3:36). O unsaved friend, if you *really* believed these words of Him who cannot lie you would not delay another moment. You would not dare to procrastinate any longer. Even now, you would cast yourself at His feet, just as you are, as a poor needy and guilty sinner, receiving Him by faith as your own Saviour. Treat not, we beseech you, these words of the Son of God as idle tales, but believe them to the saving of your soul.

20. *Joseph is insulted.* "And it came to pass, when Joseph was come unto his brethren, that they stripped Joseph out of his coat, his coat of many colors that was on him" (37:23). How this brings out the wicked hatred of these men for the one who had come seeking only their welfare. Like beasts of prey they immediately spring upon him. It was not enough to injure him; they must *insult* him too. They put him to an open shame by stripping him of his coat of many colors. And how solemnly this agrees with the Antitype. In a similar manner the Lord of Glory was dealt with. He, too, was insulted, and put to shame: "Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto Him the whole band of soldiers. And they *stripped* Him" (Matt. 27:27, 28). The same horrible ignominy is witnessed again at the Cross: "Then the soldiers when they had crucified Jesus, *took His garments*" (John 19:23).

21. *Joseph is cast into a pit.* "And they took him, and cast him into a pit; and the pit was empty, there was no water in it" (37:24). We quote now from Dr. Haldeman: "The pit wherein is no water, is another name for Hades, the underworld, the abode of the disembodied dead: of all the dead before the resurrection of Christ. 'The pit wherein is no water' (Zech. 9:11). 'For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the *heart* of the earth' (Matt. 12:40). It was here our Lord, as to His Soul, abode between death and resurrection."

22. *Joseph was taken out of the pit, alive, in his body.* "And they lifted up Joseph out of the pit" (37:28). "The actual order of the occurrence is that Joseph was first cast into the pit and then sold; but the moral order of the type is not deranged by the fact; it is in the light of the Antitypical history that we make the type to be verified, as well as to verify it. The lifting out of the pit is one of those Divine anticipations of the resurrection scattered all through the Old Testament from Genesis to Malachi" (Dr. H.).

23. *Joseph's brethren mingle Hypocrisy with their Hatred.* "And they sat down to eat bread. . . . And Judah said unto his brethren, What profit is it if we slay our brother and conceal his blood? Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he is our brother and our flesh" (37:27). First, notice the opening words of verse 25, "And they *sat down* to eat bread," and this, while Joseph was helpless in the pit! How this reminds us of Matt. 27:35, 36—"And they crucified Him. . . . And *sitting down* they watched Him there!"

But mark now this *hypocrisy*: "Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not *our hand* be upon him." The parallel to this is found in John 18: "Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment; and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, *lest they should be defiled*" (verse 28). Such deceptions will men practice upon themselves. And again, how remarkable, in this connection, are the words found in John 18:31: "Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye Him and judge Him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death!"

24. *Joseph is sold.* "They drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites" (37:28). Is it not exceedingly striking to note that from among the twelve sons of Jacob *Judah* should be the one to make this horrible bargain, just as from the twelve apostles *Judas* (the Anglecized form of the Greek *equivalent*) was the one to sell the Lord!

25. *Joseph's blood-sprinkled coat is presented to his father.* "And they took Joseph's coat and killed a kid of

the goats, and dipped the coat in the blood; and they sent the coat of many colors, and they brought it to their father." "The anticipation of the type is selfevident. The blood of Jesus Christ as the blood of a scapegoat, a sin offering, was presented to the Father" (Dr. H.). In our next, D. V., we shall consider Joseph in Egypt.

XLII. JOSEPH IN EGYPT: GENESIS 39, 40.

Genesis 37 closes with an account of Jacob's sons selling their brother Joseph unto the Midianites, and they, in turn selling him into Egypt. This speaks, in type, of Christ being rejected by Israel, and delivered unto the Gentiles. From the time that the Jewish leaders delivered their Messiah into the hands of Pilate they have, as a nation, had no further dealings with Him; and God, too, has turned from them to the Gentiles. Hence it is that there is an important turn in our type at this stage. Joseph is now seen *in the hands of the Gentiles*. But before we are told what happened to Joseph in Egypt, the Holy Spirit traces for us, in typical outline, the history of the Jews, while the antitypical Joseph is *absent from the land*. This is found in Gen. 38.

It is remarkable that Gen. 38 records the history of *Judah*, for long before the Messiah was rejected *by the Jews*, Israel (the ten tribes) had ceased to have a separate history. Here, then, Judah foreshadows the history of the Jews since their rejection of Christ. "And Judah saw there a daughter of a certain Canaanite, whose name was Shuah; and he took her, and went in to her" (Gen. 38. 2). How striking this is! "Canaanite" signifies "the merchantman," and "Shuah" means "riches." How plainly the meaning of these names give us the leading characteristics of the Jews during the centuries from the Cross! No longer are they the settled husbandmen and quiet shepherds as of old; but, instead, travelling merchants. And "riches" has been their great pursuit. Three sons were born to Judah by Shuah, and the "Numerical Bible" suggests as the meaning of their names: "Er"—*enmity*; "Onan"—*iniquity*; "Shelah"—*sprout*. Deeply significant, too, are these names. "Enmity" against Christ is what has marked the Jews all through the centuries of this Christian era. "Iniquity" surely fits this avaricious people, the average merchant of whom is noted for dishonesty, lying and cheating. While "sprout" well describes the feeble life of this nation, so marvellously preserved by God through innumerable trials and persecutions. The chapter terminates with the sordid story of Tamar, the closing portions of which

obviously foreshadowing the end-time conditions of the Jews. In the time of her *travail* "twins were in her womb" (38:27). So in the tribulation period there shall be *two* companies in Israel. The first, appropriately named "Pharez," which means "breach," speaking of the majority of the nation who will break completely with God and receive and worship the Antichrist. The second, "Zerah," that had the "scarlet thread" upon his hand (38:30), pointing to the godly remnant who will be saved, as was Rahab of old by the "scarlet cord." But we must turn now to Gen. 39.

Genesis 39 is more than a continuation of what has been before us in Gen. 37, being separated, as it is, from that chapter by what is recorded in 38. Genesis in 39 is really *a new beginning* in the type, taking us back to the Incarnation, and tracing the experiences of the Lord Jesus from another angle. Continuing our enumeration (see previous article), we may observe:

26. *Joseph becomes a Servant.*

"And Joseph was brought down to Egypt; and Potiphar an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, brought him out of the hands of the Ishmaelites, which had brought him down thither (39:1). What a contrast from being the beloved son in his father's house to the degradation of slavery in Egypt! But this was as nothing compared with the voluntary self-humiliation of the Lord Jesus. He who was in the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God, made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant (Phil. 2:6, 7). "Bond-slave" expresses the force of the original better than "servant." It is to this the prophetic language of Psalm 40 refers. There we hear the Lord Jesus saying, "Sacrifice and offering Thou didst not desire; *Mine ears hast Thou digged*; burnt offering and sin offering hast Thou not required. Then said I, lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of Me. I delight to do Thy will, O My God." These words carry us back to Exod. 21:5, 6: And if the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free. Then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door post; and *his master shall bore his ear through with an awl*, and he shall serve him for ever." The Lord Jesus was the Speaker of that prophecy in Psalm

40, and the fulfiller of this type in Exod. 21. He was the One who took the Servant place, and voluntarily entered into the degradation of slavery. And it is this which Joseph here so strikingly typified.

27. *Joseph was a Prosperous Servant.*

"And the Lord was with Joseph, and *he was a prosperous man*, and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. And his master saw that the Lord was with him, and that the Lord made all that he did to prosper in his hand" (39: 2, 3). Observe, particularly, it is here said, the Lord made all that Joseph did "*to prosper in his hand.*" How these words remind us of two prophetic scriptures which speak of the perfect Servant of Jehovah. The first is the opening Psalm, which brings before us the "Blessed Man," the Man who walked not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stood in the way of sinners, nor sat in the seat of the scornful; the Man whose delight was in the Law of the Lord, and in whose Law He did meditate day and night; the Man of whom God said, "And He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth His fruit in His Season; His leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever He doeth shall prosper" (Psa. 1:3). Manifestly, this spoke, specifically, of the Lord Jesus, in whom, alone, the terms of the opening verses of this Psalm were fully realized. The second scripture is found in that matchless fifty-third of Isaiah (every sentence of which referred to the Son of God incarnate, and to Him, expressly, as Jehovah's "*Servant,*" see 52:13), we read, "The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand." How marvellously accurate the type! Of Joseph it is recorded, "*The Lord made all that he did to prosper in his hand*" (Gen. 39:3). Of Christ it is said, "The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand" (Isa. 53:10).

28. *Joseph's master was well pleased with him.*

"And Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served him: and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand" (39:4). How could it be otherwise? Joseph was entirely different from any other servant that Potiphar ever had. The fear of God was upon him; the Lord was with him, prospering him; and he served his master faithfully. So it was with the One whom Joseph foreshadowed. The Lord Jesus was entirely different from any other servant God ever had. The fear of the Lord was

upon Him (see Isa. 11:2). And so faithfully did He serve God, He could say, "I do *always* those things that please Him" (John 8:29).

29. *Joseph, the servant, was made a blessing to others.*

"And it came to pass from the time that he had made him overseer in his house, and over all that he had, that the Lord blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the Lord was upon all that he had in the house and in the field" (34:5). So, too, the Father entrusted to the Son all the interests of the Godhead—the manifestation of the Divine character, the glorifying of God's name, and the vindication of His throne. And what has been the outcome of the Beloved of the Father taking the Servant place, and assuming and discharging these onerous responsibilities? Has not the Lord "blessed" the antitypical "Egyptian's house," for the sake of that One whom Joseph foreshadowed? Clearly, the "Egyptian's house" symbolized *the world*, and how bountifully has the world been blessed for Christ's sake!

30. *Joseph was a goodly person.*

"And Joseph was a goodly person, and well favored" (39:6). How carefully has the Holy Spirit here guarded the type! We must always distinguish between the person and the place which he occupies. Joseph had entered into the degradation of slavery. He was no longer at his own disposal, but subject to the will of another. He was no longer dwelling in his father's house in Canaan, but instead, was a bond slave in an Egyptian's house. Such was his *position*. But concerning his *person* we are told, "Joseph was a *goodly* person, and well favored." So, too, the Son of God took a lowly place, the place of humiliation and shame, the place of submission and servitude. Yet, how zealously did the Father see to it that the glory of His person was guarded! No sooner was He laid in the manger (the *place* He took), than God sent the angels to announce to the Bethlehem shepherds that the One born (the *person*) was none other than "Christ, the Lord." A little later, the wise men from the East prostrate themselves before the young child in worship. As soon as He comes forth to enter (the *place* of) His public ministry—serving others, instead of being served—God causes one to go before Him and testify that he was not worthy to stoop down and unloose the shoe-latchet of the (person) of the Lamb of God.

So, too, on the Cross, where, supremely, God's Servant was seen in the place of shame, God caused Him to be owned as "the Son of God" (Matt. 27:54)! Truly, was *He* a "goodly person, and well favored."

31. *Joseph was sorely tempted, yet sinned not.*

"And it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me. But he refused and said unto his master's wife, Behold, my master wotteth not what is with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand. There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back anything from me but thee, because thou art his wife; how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God? And it came to pass as she spake to Joseph day by day, that he hearkened not unto her, to lie by her, or to be with her. And it came to pass about this time, that Joseph went into the house to do his business; and there was none of the men of the house there within. And she caught him by his garment, saying, Lie with me: and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out" (39:7-12).

It is surely not without design that the Holy Spirit has placed in juxtaposition the account of the unchastity of Judah in Gen. 38 with the chastity of Joseph here in Gen. 39. And how significant that the *un-faithfulness* of the one is placed *before* the *faithfulness* of the other! Joseph's temptation foreshadowed the temptation of the Lord Jesus, the last Adam, and His faithfulness in refusing the evil solicitations of Satan, which was in marked contrast from the failure of the first Adam, before Him. The marvellous accuracy of our type may be further seen by observing that Joseph's temptation is here divided into *three* distinct parts (as was that of our Lord), see verses 7, 10, 12. So, again, it should be remarked, that Joseph was tempted not in Canaan, by his brethren, but in Egypt (symbol of the world), by the wife of a captain of Pharaoh's guard. And the temptation suffered by the Lord Jesus emanated, not from His brethren according to the flesh, but from Satan, "the prince of this world."

Beautiful is it to mark how Joseph resisted the repeated temptation—"How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" This is the more striking if we link up this utterance of Joseph's with Psa. 105:19, "The Word of the Lord tried him." So it was by the same Word that the

Saviour repulsed the Enemy. But notice here one point in *contrast*: "And he (Joseph) left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out" (39:12). So, the Apostle Paul, writing to Timothy, enjoined him to "*Flee* youthful lusts" (2 Tim. 2:22). How different with the Perfect One! He said, "Get thee hence, Satan" (Matt. 4:10), and we read, "Then the Devil *leaveth* Him." In all things *He has the* preëminence.

32. *Joseph was falsely accused.*

"And she laid up his garment by her, until his lord came home. And she spake unto him according to these words, saying, The Hebrew servant, which thou hast brought unto us, came in unto me to mock me. And it came to pass, as I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled out" (39:16-18). There was no ground whatever for a *true* charge to be brought against Joseph, so an *unjust* one was preferred. So it was, too, with Him who was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners." His enemies "the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put Him to death. *But found none.*" Yet, at the last, "came two *false* witnesses" (Matt. 16:59, 60), who bore untruthful testimony against Him.

33. *Joseph attempted no defence.*

"And it came to pass, when his master heard the words of his wife, which she spake unto him, saying, After this manner did thy servant to me: that his wrath was kindled" (39:19), though notice, it does not add, "against Joseph." In Gen. 37, we beheld Joseph's passive submission to the wrong done him by his heartless brethren. So here, when falsely and foully accused by this Egyptian woman, he attempts no self-vindication; not a word of appeal is made; nor is there any murmuring against the cruel injustice done him, as he is cast into prison. There was no recrimination; nothing but a quiet enduring of the wrong. When Joseph was reviled, like the Saviour, he reviled not again. And how all this reminds us of what we read in Isa. 53:7, with its recorded fulfillment in the Gospels, "He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet *He opened not His mouth*; He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth!"

34. Joseph was cast into prison.

“And Joseph’s master took him, and put him into the prison, a place where the king’s prisoners were bound; and he was there in the prison” (39:20).

“Taking the garment that Joseph had left behind him in his flight, she used it as a proof of his guilt, and first to the servants, and then to her husband. She made out a case against the Hebrew slave. The way she spoke of her husband to the servants (verse 14) shows the true character of the woman, and perhaps also the terms of her married life; while the fact that Potiphar only placed Joseph in prison instead of commanding him to be put to death is another indication of the state of affairs. For appearance’ sake Potiphar must take some action, but the precise action taken tells its own tale. He evidently did not credit her story” (Dr. G. Thomas).

Just as Joseph, though completely innocent, was unrighteously cast into prison, so our Lord was unjustly sentenced to death by one who owned repeatedly, “I find no fault in Him.” And how striking is the parallel between the acts of Potiphar and Pilate. It is evident that Potiphar did not believe the accusation which his wife brought against Joseph—had he really done so, as has been pointed out, he would have ordered his Hebrew slave put to death. But to save appearances he had Joseph cast into prison. Now mark the close parallel in Pilate. He, too, it is evident, did not believe in the guilt of our Lord or why have been so reluctant to give his consent for Him to be crucified? He, too, knew the character of those who accused the Saviour. But, for the sake of appearances—as an officer of the Roman Empire, against the One who was charged with being a rebel against Cæsar, for political expediency—he passed sentence.

35. Joseph thus suffered at the hands of the Gentiles.

Not only was Joseph envied and hated by his own brethren, and sold by them into the hands of the Gentiles, but he was also treated unfairly by the Gentiles too, and unjustly cast into prison. So it was with his Antitype, “The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against His Christ. For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom Thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, *with the Gentiles,*

and the people of Israel were gathered together" (Acts 4: 26, 27).

36. *Joseph, the innocent one, suffered severely.*

In Stephen's speech we find a statement which bears this out. Said he, "And the patriarchs, moved with envy, sold Joseph into Egypt," and then, referring to his experiences after he had become a slave, he adds, "but God was with him, and delivered him out of *all his afflictions*" (Acts 7: 9, 10). How much, we wonder, is covered by these words! What indignities, trials and pains, was he called on to suffer? In Psa. 105 there is another word more specific, "He (God) sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold for a servant: *whose feet they hurt with fetters*; he was laid in iron" (verses 17, 18). How these references remind us of that Blessed One, who was mocked and spat upon, scourged and crowned with thorns, and nailed to the cruel tree!

37. *Joseph won the respect of his jailor.*

"But the Lord was with Joseph, and showed him mercy, and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison" (39: 21). Is not the antitype of this found in the fact that the Roman centurion, the one who had charge of the Crucifixion of the Saviour, cried, "Certainly this was a Righteous Man" (Luke 23: 47). Thus did God give His Son favor in the sight of this Roman who corresponded with Joseph's jailor.

38. *Joseph was numbered with transgressors.*

"And it came to pass that after these things, that the butler of the king of Egypt, and his baker had offended their lord the king of Egypt. And Pharaoh was wroth against two of his officers, against the chief of the butlers and against the chief of the bakers. And he put them in ward in the house of the captain of the guard, into the prison, the place where Joseph was bound" (40: 1-3). What a marvellous line is this in our typical picture. Joseph was *not alone* in the place of shame and suffering. Nor was the Lord Jesus as He hung on the heights of Calvary. And just as there were *two* malefactors crucified with Him, so *two* offenders were in the prison with Joseph! But the analogy extends ever further than this.

39. *Joseph was the means of blessing to one, but the pronouncer of judgment on the other.*

His fellow prisoners had each of them a dream, and in interpreting them, Joseph declared that the butler should be delivered from prison, but to the baker he said, "Within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thy head from off thee, *and shall hang thee on a tree*, and the birds shall eat thy flesh from off thee" (40:19). It is not without good reason that the Holy Spirit has seen fit to record the details of these dreams. Connected with the spared one, the butler, we read of "the cup" into which the grapes were pressed (49:10-12), suggesting to us the precious Blood of the Lamb, by which all who believe are delivered. Connected with the one who was not delivered, the baker, were baskets full of bakemeats (40:16, 17), suggesting human labors, the works of man's hands, which are powerless to deliver the sinner, or justify him before God: for all such there is only the "Curse," referred to here by the baker being "hanged on a tree" (cf. Gal. 3:13). So it was at the Cross: the one thief went to Paradise; the other to Perdition.

40. *Joseph evidenced his knowledge of the future.*

In interpreting their dreams, Joseph foretold the future destiny of the butler and the baker. But observe that in doing this he was careful to ascribe the glory to Another, saying, "Do not interpretations belong to God?" (40:8). So the One whom Joseph foreshadowed, again and again, made known what should come to pass in the future, yet did he say, "For I have not spoken of Myself; but the Father which sent Me, He gave Me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak" John 12:49).

41. *Joseph's predictions came true.*

"And it came to pass the third day, which was Pharaoh's birthday, that he made a feast unto all his servants; and he lifted up the head of the chief butler and of the chief baker among his servants. And he restored the chief butler unto his butlership again; and he gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand. But he hanged the chief baker: *as Joseph had interpreted to them*" (40:20-22). Just as Joseph had interpreted so it came to pass. So shall it be with every word of the Son of God, Heaven and earth shall pass away, but His words shall not pass away. And O, unsaved reader, just as the solemn announcement of Joseph concerning the baker was actually fulfilled, so shall these words of the Lord Jesus be found true—"he that believeth not shall be damned!"

42. *Joseph desired to be Remembered.*

Said Joseph to the butler, "But *think on me* when it shall be well with thee" (40:14). So, in connection with the Supper, the Saviour has said, "This do in remembrance of Me."

As we admire these lovely typical pictures, like the queen of Sheba, there is no more strength left in us, and we can only bow our heads and say, "How precious are Thy thoughts unto me, O God! How great is the sum of them!"

XLIII. JOSEPH'S EXALTATION. GENESIS 41.

Our present chapter opens by presenting to us the king of Egypt dreaming two dreams, and awaking with his spirit troubled. The court magicians and wise men were summoned, and Pharaoh told them his dreams, but "there was none that could interpret them to Pharaoh." Then it was that the chief butler recalled his experience in prison. He remembers how *he* had a dream, and that a Hebrew slave had interpreted aright its significance. He recounts this now to the king, and Pharaoh sends at once for Joseph, who explains to him the meaning of his own dreams. There are several important truths which here receive a striking exemplification:

First, we are shown that "*The king's heart* is in the hand of *the Lord*, as the rivers of waters. *He* turneth it whithersoever He will" (Prov. 21:1). It was no accident that Pharaoh dreamed as he did, and when he did. God's time had come for Joseph to be delivered from prison and exalted to a position of high honor and responsibility, and these dreams were but the instrument employed by God to accomplish this end. Similarly, He used, long afterwards, the sleeplessness of another king to lead to the deliverance of Mordecai and his fellows. This truth has been expressed so forcefully and ably by C. H. M. in his "Notes on Genesis," we cannot refrain from quoting him:

"The most trivial and the most important, the most likely and the most unlikely circumstances are made to minister to the development of God's purposes. In chapter 39 Satan uses Potiphar's wife, and in chapter 40 he uses Pharaoh's chief butler. The former he used to put Joseph into the dungeon; and the latter he used to keep him there, through his ungrateful negligence; but all in vain. God was behind the scenes. His finger was guiding all the springs of the vast machine of circumstances, and when the due time was come, he brought forth the man of His purpose, and set his feet in a large room. Now, this is ever God's prerogative. *He is above all*, and can use all for the accomplishment of His grand and unsearchable designs. It is sweet to be able thus to trace our Father's hand and counsel in everything. Sweet to know that all sorts of agents are at His sovereign

disposal; angels, men and devils—*all are under His omnipotent hand*, and all are made to carry out His purposes” (p. 307: italics are ours). How rarely one finds such faith-strengthening sentiments such as these set forth, plainly, by writers of today!

Second, we are shown in the early part of Genesis 41 how that *the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God*. As it is well known, Egypt stands in Scripture as a figure of this world. In Joseph’s time, the land of the Pharaoh’s was the center of learning and culture, the proud leader of the ancient civilizations. But the people were idolaters. They knew not God, and only in His light can we see light. Apart from Him, all is darkness, morally and spiritually. So we see it in the chapter before us. The magicians were impotent, the wise men displayed their ignorance, and Pharaoh was made to feel the powerlessness of all human resources and the worthlessness of all human wisdom.

Third, the *man of God* was the only one that had true wisdom and light. How true it is that “the *secret* of the Lord is with them that fear Him!” These dreams of Pharaoh had a prophetic significance: They respected the future of Egypt (typically, the world), and no Gentile, as such, had intelligence in the purpose of God respecting the earth. God was pleased to make known His counsels to a Gentile, as here, a *Jew* had to be called, each time, as interpreter. It was thus with Nebuchadnezzar. The wise men of Chaldea were as helpless as the magicians of Egypt; Daniel, alone, had understanding. So, too, with Belshazzar and all his companions—the aged prophet had to be called in to decipher the message upon the wall. Well would it be if leaders of the world today turned to the inspired writings of the Hebrew prophets of the things which must shortly come to pass.

Fourth: That “all things *work together for good* to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose,” is writ large across our lesson. And well for us if we take this to heart. But the trouble is, we grow so impatient under the process, while God is taking the tangled threads of our lives and *making them* “work together for good.” We become so occupied with present circumstances that hope is no longer exercised, and the brighter and better future is blotted from our view. Let us bear in mind that Scripture declares, “*Better is the end of a thing than the*

beginning thereof" (Ecc. 7:8). Be of good cheer, faint heart; sorrow may endure for a night, but *joy cometh in the morning*. So it was with Joseph. For a season he suffered wrongfully, but at the last God vindicated and rewarded him. Remember Joseph then, troubled reader, and "let patience have her perfect work." But we must turn from these moralizings and consider the typical bearings of our chapter. We continue our previous enumeration.

43. *Joseph, in due time, was delivered from prison.*

Joseph had been rejected by his brethren, and treated unjustly and cruelly by the Egyptians. Through no fault of his own he had been cast into prison. But God did not suffer him to end his days there. The place of shame and suffering was to be exchanged for one of high dignity and glory. The throne was to supplant the dungeon. And now that God's time for this had arrived, nothing could hinder the accomplishment of His purpose. So it was with our blessed Lord. Israel might despise and reject Him, wicked hands might take and crucify Him, the powers of darkness might rage against Him; His lifeless body might be taken down and laid in the tomb, the sepulchre sealed and a watch set, but "*it was not possible* that He should be holden of death" (Acts 2:24). No; on the third day, He rose again in triumph o'er the grave, leaving the cerements of death behind Him. How beautifully this was prefigured in the case of Joseph. "Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him hastily out of the dungeon; and he shaved himself, *and changed his raiment*, and came in unto Pharaoh" (41:14). Compare John 20:6, 7!

44. *Joseph was delivered from prison by the hand of God.*

It is evident that, apart from Divine intervention, Joseph had been suffered to languish in the dungeon to the end of his days. It was only the coming in of God—Pharaoh's troubled spirit, the failure of the magicians' to interpret his dream, the butler's sudden recollection of the Hebrew interpreter—that brought about his release. Joseph himself recognized this, as is clear from his words to his brethren, at a later date: "And *God* sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you who sent me hither, *but God*: and *He hath made me* a father to Pharaoh, and Lord of all his house, and ruler throughout all the land

of Egypt. Haste ye, and go up to my father, and say unto him, Thus saith thy son Joseph, *God hath made me* lord of all Egypt" (45:7-9). So it was with the Saviour in being delivered from the prison of the tomb: "Whom *God* hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death" (Acts 2:24). "This Jesus *hath God raised up*" (Acts 2:32). Him *God* raised up the third day, and showed Him openly" (Acts 10:40).*

45. *Joseph is seen now as the Revealer of secrets.*

Like the butler and baker before him, Pharaoh now recounted to Joseph the dreams which had so troubled his spirit, and which the "wise men" were unable to interpret. It is beautiful to mark the modesty of Joseph on this occasion, "And Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, It is not in me: *God* shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace" (41:16). So, in a much higher sense, the Lord Jesus said, "I have given unto them the words which Thou gavest Me" (Jno. 17:8). And again, "As the Father hath taught Me, I speak these things" (Jno. 8:28). Once more, "For I have not spoken of Myself: but the Father which sent Me, He gave Me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak" (Jno. 12:49).

Having listened to the king's dream, Joseph said: "God hath showed Pharaoh what He is about to do" (41:25), and then he made known the meaning of the dreams. How close is the parallel between this and what we read of in the opening verse of the Apocalypse! Just as God made known to the Egyptians, *through Joseph*, what *He* was "about to do," so has He now made known to us, *through Jesus Christ*, the things He will shortly do in this world. The parallel is perfect: said Joseph, "What God is about to do He *showeth* unto Pharaoh" (41:28), and the Apocalypse, we are told, is "the revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him *to show* unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass."

46. *Joseph warned of a coming danger, and urged his hearers to make suitable provision to meet it.*

Joseph was no honied-mouthed "optimist," who spake only smooth and pleasant things. He fearlessly told the truth. He shunned not to declare the whole counsel of God.

*There are other Scriptures which show that the Lord Jesus *raised Himself* (John 2:19; 10:17, 18, etc.). But, above, we have quoted those which emphasized the fulfillment of the type.

He declared that, following the season of Divine blessing and privilege, there would come a time of famine, a famine which should consume the land, and be "very grievous." And in view of this, he warned them to make ready and be prepared. So also was Christ the faithful and true Witness. He made known the fact that death does not end all, that there is a life to come. He warned those who trusted in their earthly possessions and who boasted of how they were going to enjoy them, that their souls would be "required" of them, and that at short notice. He lifted the veil which hides the unseen, and gave His hearers a view of the sufferings of the damned in Hell. He spake often of that place where their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched, and where there is weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. He counselled men to make provision against the future. He bade men to prepare for that which lies ahead of all—a face to face meeting with God.

47. *Joseph appeared next as the Wonderful Counsellor.*

Having interpreted to Pharaoh the meaning of his dreams, Joseph then undertook to advise the king as to the wisest course to follow in order to meet the approaching emergency, and provide for the future. There were to be seven years of plenty, which was to be followed by seven years of famine. Joseph, therefore, counselled the king to store up the corn during the time of plenty, against the need which would arise when the season of scarcity should come upon them. Thus did Joseph manifest the wisdom given to him by God, and display his immeasurable superiority over all the wise men of Egypt. Again the analogy is perfect. Christ, too, has been exhibited as "the Wonderful Counsellor," the One sent by God with a message to tell men how to prepare for the future, and make sure their eternal interests. He is the One "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col. 2:3).

48. *Joseph's counsel commended itself to Pharaoh and his officers.*

"And the thing was good in the eyes of Pharaoh and in the eyes of all his servants. And Pharaoh said unto his servants, Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is? And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Forasmuch as God hath showed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art" (41:37-39). Pharaoh

recognized that the wisdom manifested by this Hebrew slave had its source not in occult magic, but in the Spirit of God. Joseph had spoken with a discretion and wisdom far different from that possessed by the court philosophers, and this was freely owned by the king and his servants. So, too, the words of the Lord Jesus made a profound impression upon those who heard Him. "And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were *astonished at His doctrine*. For He taught them as One having authority, and not as the scribes" (Mat. 7:28, 29). "And when He was come into His own country, He taught them in their synagogues, insomuch that *they were astonished*, and said, Whence hath this man *this wisdom?*" (Mat. 13:54). Just as Pharaoh and his servants were struck by the wisdom in Joseph. So here, those who listened to the Lord Jesus marvelled at His wisdom. And just as Pharaoh confessed, "Can we find such a one as this is? . . . there is *none so discreet and wise,*" so the auditors of Christ acknowledged, "Never man spake like this Man" (Jno. 7:46)!

49. *Joseph is duly exalted, and set over all Egypt.*

"And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Forasmuch as God hath showed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art. Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou" (41:39, 40). What a blessed change this was: from shame to glory, from the dungeon to the place of rule, from being a slave in fetters to being elevated high above all, Pharaoh alone being excepted. This was a grand reward for his previous fidelity, and a fitting recognition of his worth. And how beautifully this speaks to us of the One whom Joseph foreshadowed! He was here in humiliation and shame, but He is here so no longer. God has highly exalted Him. He is "gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers *being made subject unto Him*" (1 Pet. 3:22).

50. *Joseph was seated on the throne of another.*

How marvellously accurate is the type. Joseph was not seated upon his own throne; he was not in the place of rule over his brethren. Though he was placed over Pharaoh's house, and according to his word was all Egypt to be ruled yet, "in the Throne" Pharaoh was greater than Joseph. So we read in Revelation 3:21, that the ascended Christ has

said, "to him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My Throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His Throne."

"Today our Lord Jesus Christ shares the throne of the Father as Joseph shared the throne of Pharaoh. As Joseph ruled over Pharaoh's house with his word, so today our Lord Jesus Christ rules over the Father's household, the household of faith, the Church, by and through His Word. And today, while the Lord Jesus Christ is on the throne of His Father, He is not on His own throne. Read the passage just quoted in Revelation again, and it will be seen that our Lord Jesus Christ Himself makes a distinction between His own throne and the Father's throne, and promises reward to the overcomer, not on the Father's throne, but on His own; and we know, according to the promise of the angel made to Mary, and the covenant made to David, and the title He wears as the King of Israel, 'the Son of David, the Son of Abraham,' that His throne is at Jerusalem, 'the city of the great King.' On His Father's throne He sits today as the Rejected Man, the Rejected Jew" (Dr. Halderman).

51. *Joseph was exalted to the throne because of his personal worth.*

"All this is typical of the present exaltation of Christ Jesus the Lord. He who was once the Crucified is now the Glorified. He whom men once put upon a gibbet, has been placed by God upon His throne. Joseph was given his place of exaltation in Egypt purely on the ground of his personal worth and actual service rendered by him to the country and kingdom of Egypt" (Mr. Knapp). And what a lovely parallel to this we find in Phil. 2—yet as far as our Lord *excelled* Joseph in personal worth and service, so far is His exaltation the higher—"Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him" (Phil. 2: 6-9).

52. *Joseph was invested with such insignia as became his new position.*

“And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph’s hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck” (40:42). And thus we read of the Antitype: “Him hath God exalted with His right hand *to be a Prince*, and a Saviour” (Acts 5:31). And again, “But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, *crowned with glory and honor*” (Heb. 2:9). Compare, too, the description of our glorified Lord as given in Revelation 1. There we behold Him, “clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the breasts with a golden girdle” (5:13).

53. *Joseph’s authority and glory are publicly owned.*

“And he made him to ride in the second chariot which he had; and they cried before him, Bow the knee; and he made him ruler over all the land of Egypt” (41:43). On the day of Pentecost, Peter said to the Jews who had condemned and crucified the Saviour, “Therefore let all the House of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, *both Lord and Christ*” (Acts 2:36). And it is the part of wisdom, dear reader, to recognize and own this. *Have you* recognized the exalted dignity of Christ, and by faith seen that the One who died on Calvary’s Cross is now seated on the right hand of the Majesty on high? *Have you* submitted to His Lordship, so that you live now only to please Him? *Have you* “bowed the knee” before Him? If not, O, may Divine grace constrain you to do so without further delay, voluntarily and gladly, that you may not be among the great crowd who shall, in the coming Day, be *compelled* to do so; for God has sworn, “that at the Name of Jesus *every knee should bow*, of things in heaven and things in earth and things under the earth” (Phil. 2:10).

54. *Joseph received from Pharaoh a new name.*

“And Pharaoh called Joseph’s name Zaphnath-paaneah” (41:45), which signifies, according to its Egyptian meaning, “the Saviour of the world.” So, to quote once more from Phil. 2, we read, “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, *and given Him the Name which is above every name . . . Jesus*” (Phil. 2:9, 10). This name He bore while on earth, but at that time it was held as pledge and promise, “Thou shalt call His name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins” (Mat. 1:21) said the

angel. But He could not "save His people from their sins" until He had borne them in His own body on the tree, until He had risen from the dead, until He returned to heaven and sent forth the Holy Spirit *to apply* the benefits and virtues of His finished work. But when He ascended on high He became Saviour in fact. God exalted Him with His right hand "*to be a Prince and a Saviour*" (Acts 5: 31), and therefore did *God Himself then* give *to* His beloved Son the Name which is above every name, even the Name of "*Jesus,*" which means *the Saviour*; just as *after* the period of his shame was over, and Joseph had been exalted by Pharaoh, *he, then,* received the name which signifies "*the Saviour of the world!*"

Reader, have you an interest, a personal one, in the value and saving efficacy of that Name which is above every name? If not, receive Him now as your own Saviour. If by grace, you have, then bow before Him in adoration and praise.

XLIV. JOSEPH THE SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD. GENESIS 41

55. *Joseph has a wife given to him.*

“And Pharaoh called Joseph’s name Zaphnath-paaneah (the Egyptian meaning of which is ‘Saviour of the world’); and he gave him to wife Asenath, the daughter of Poti-pharah priest of On” (40:45). It is with some hesitation and much reluctance that at this point the writer finds himself differing from other students and commentators. Many whom we respect highly have regarded Asenath as here prefiguring the Church. Their principal reason for doing this is because Joseph’s wife was a *Gentile*. But while allowing the force of this, we feel that it is more than counterbalanced by another point which makes against it. Believing that *everything* in this inspired narrative has a definite meaning and typical value, and that each verse has been put into its present place by the Holy Spirit, we are confronted with what is, to us, an insuperable difficulty if Asenath prefigures the Church, namely, the fact that in the very next verse which follows the mention of Pharaoh giving a wife to Joseph, we are told, “And Joseph was *thirty years old* when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt” (41:46). Had this statement followed immediately after 41:14, which records Joseph being brought out of prison to appear before Pharaoh, and *after* this we had been told Joseph received his wife, we should be obliged to regard Asenath as a type of the Church; but as it is, we believe the typical application must be sought elsewhere, as we shall now proceed to point out.

The Holy Spirit has here (we are assured, with definite design) made mention of Joseph having a wife *before* his “age” is referred to, and *before* his life’s work began. That *the age* of Joseph at the time his real work started, pointed to the age of the Lord Jesus when *His* public ministry commenced, is too obvious to admit of dispute. The fact, then, that the Holy Spirit speaks of Joseph’s wife *before* the mention of him being thirty years of age, suggests to the writer that the typical significance of Asenath must be sought at some point of time *before* the Lord Jesus entered upon His life’s mission. And that, of course, takes us back

to Old Testament times. And there, we *do* learn of Jehovah (the Lord Jesus) possessing a "wife," even Israel. From the various Scriptures which bring this out we select two verses from Jeremiah 3. There, God's prophet, when expostulating with His wayward people, said, "Turn, O backsliding children, said the Lord; for I am *married unto you*" (verse 14); "Surely *as a wife* treacherously departeth from her husband, *so* have ye dealt treacherously with Me, O house of Israel, saith the Lord" (verse 20).

But against this it will be objected, How could Asenath, the *Egyptian*, wife of Joseph, typify *Israel*, the wife of Jehovah? Formidable as this objection appears at first sight, it is, nevertheless, capable of easy solution. The difficulty disappears if we go back to the time when Israel first became Jehovah's wife. Upon this point the Scriptures are very explicit. In Ezekiel 16, where the prophet is outlining the sad history of Israel, and where he says, "How weak is thine heart, saith the Lord God, seeing thou doest all these things, the work of an imperious whorish woman; in that thou buildest thine eminent place in the head of every way, and makest thine high place in every street; and hast not been as a harlot, in that thou scornest hire. *But as a wife* that committeth adultery, which taketh strangers instead of her husband;" here, at the outset, the prophet declares, "Thus saith the Lord God unto Jerusalem, Thy birth and thy nativity *is of the land of Canaan*; thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother a Hittite" (Ezek. 16:3). Here, then, we learn the *origin* (the *moral* origin, no doubt) of Israel, and how fittingly did Asenath, the Gentile, prefigure Jehovah's wife at that time! It was not until *after* Israel was redeemed from Egypt's bondage and corruption that they became *separated* from all other nations. If further confirmation be necessary it is found in Jeremiah 2:2, "Go cry in the ears of Jerusalem, thus saith the Lord; I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, *when* thou wentest after Me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown." Israel, then, became Jehovah's *in Egypt*, when redeemed by blood, and after by power.

The *issue* from Joseph's marriage appears to us to fit in with the interpretation suggested above much better than with the common application of the type of Asenath to the Church. "Unto Joseph were born two sons" (41:50), and does not this correspond with the history of Israel *after* she

became Jehovah's wife? Was not *the issue* of that union the *two kingdoms* in the days of Rehoboam, and does not the meaning of the names of Joseph's two sons well describe the two kingdoms which, ultimately, issued from Israel? "Joseph called the name of the first born Manasseh" (41:51), which signifies "*Forgetting*," and was it not *that* which, peculiarly, characterized the ten-tribed kingdom! "The name of the second called he Ephraim" (41:52), which means "*Fruitful*," and such was Judah, from whom the Lord Jesus came!

56. *Joseph's marriage was arranged by Pharaoh.*

How perfectly this agrees with what we read of in Matthew 22:2! "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, *which made a marriage for His Son*." The fact that Asenath is mentioned *before* we are told that Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh and began his life's work (type of Christ as He began His public ministry), and that the birth and naming of his sons occurred *afterward*, suggests (as is so often the case, both in types and prophecies) that there is here a *double* foreshadowment. This Gentile wife of Joseph points backward, first, to Israel's condition *before* Jehovah separated her from all other peoples and took her unto Himself; and, second, the type seems to point forward to the time when the Lord shall resume His dealings with her, see Jeremiah 31:31-34; Ezekiel 16:62, 63; Hosea 2:19-23; Isaiah 54:5-8*). Then, too, shall the names of Joseph's two sons be found to possess a *double* significance, for God's will "*forget*" Israel's past, and Israel shall then, as never before, be found "*fruitful*."

57. *Joseph was thirty years old when he began his life's work.*

"And Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt" (41:46). Every line in this wondrous picture has its own beauty and value. There is nothing here without profound significance. The Holy Spirit has a definite design in telling us what was Joseph's age when his public service began. He was thirty years old. How perfectly does type and antitype correspond! In Luke 3:23 we read, "And Jesus Himself began to be about *thirty*

*The spiritual and dispensational condition of Israel at the moment when God shall resume His dealings with His ancient people, is, again, aptly figured by a *Gentile*, for they are termed by Him now, and until then "Lo-ammi!" (Hosea 1:9), which means "*Not My people*."

years of age." This was the age of the Lord Jesus when He commenced His public ministry, as it was Joseph's when he began *his* life's work.

58. *Joseph went forth on his mission from Pharaoh's presence.*

"And Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh" (41:46). In this chapter Pharaoh—as the one who ruled Egypt, who delighted in the excellences of Joseph, who set Joseph over all his house, but who retained the position of supremacy as to the throne—prefigured God the Father. Viewed in this light, how blessed is the typical force of the last-made quotation. It was from Pharaoh's "presence" Joseph began his life's work! How marvellously this corresponds, again, with what we read in Luke 3! The words which immediately precede the mention of the Lord being thirty years old when His public service began, are the well-known utterance of the Father at the time of His baptism, "Thou art My beloved Son; in Thee I am well pleased" (Lu. 3:22). So little is told us about the Saviour before His active ministry began. The years spent at Nazareth, save for that one brief statement which covered the period of His boyhood, are passed over in silence. But as He came up out of the waters of baptism, the Father bore public testimony to the perfect life which His Son had lived here on earth, for, without doubt, the words, "In Thee I am well pleased," not only affirmed the excellency of Christ's person, but witnessed to the Father's approval of the thirty years which His incarnate Son had spent in obscurity. That which we desire to call attention to here is, just as Joseph went forth to his work from Pharaoh's "presence," so the Lord Jesus started out on His public service from the Father's presence, there manifested at the Jordan!

59. *Joseph's service was an active and itinerant one.*

"And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of Egypt" (41:46). Joseph was no idler. He did not betray Pharaoh's confidence in him, but faithfully discharged his duty. He did not remain in the place of ease and comfort, but "went throughout all the land of Egypt." How well these words remind us of what we read in the Gospels concerning that One whom Joseph foreshadowed. Of Him we read, "And Jesus went

about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness" (Mat. 4:23). And again, "And Jesus went about *all the cities and villages*" (Mat. 9:35).

60. *Joseph's exaltation was followed by a season of plenty.*

"And in the seven plenteous years the earth brought forth by handfuls. And he gathered up all the food of the seven years, which were in the land of Egypt, and laid up the food in the cities: the food of the field, which was round about every city, laid he up in the same. And Joseph gathered corn as the sand of the sea, very much, until he left numbering; for it was without number" (41:47-49). Concerning the typical meaning of these verses we quote from Mr. Knapp: "These seven years of great abundance picture, if they do not typify, the present dispensation of grace in which it is our happy lot to live. 'Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation' (2 Cor. 6:2). There were seven years, not of plenty merely, but of 'great plenty.' And during those years, we read 'the earth brought forth by handfuls.' It was a time of extraordinary abundance. And there was never a day like the one in which we live. Never before the present dispensation did God send His messengers out into all the world to proclaim to every sinner a free and a full salvation through faith in the name of His own exalted Son. There never was a time of such 'abundance,' such 'great plenty,' at any former period of God's dealings with the earth. And it is a remarkable fact, which I have not seen previously noted, that of all the distinct dispensations of time referred to in Scripture, the present is by far the longest. And oh, what a tale of grace this tells! God is indeed 'long suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish.' "

We doubt not that the saved of *this* dispensation are far in excess of any previous one. How few were saved during the centuries which passed from the days of Abel up to the Flood! How few appear to have been saved during the times of the patriarchs! How few among Israel, from the days of Joshua onwards, gave evidence of being born again! How few seem to have been saved during the public ministry of Christ—but a hundred and twenty were found in the upper room waiting for the Holy Spirit. How evident it is, then, that in contrast from all that has preceded, the

earth is *now* bringing forth "in abundance"! It is the "*much fruit*" (Jno. 12: 24) which our Lord declared should issue from His death.

61. *Joseph's exaltation was also followed by a period of famine.*

"And the seven years of plenteousness, that was in the land of Egypt, were ended. And the seven years of dearth began to come, according as Joseph had said; and the dearth was in all lands; but in all the land of Egypt there was bread" (41: 53, 54). Just as the "seven years"—a *complete* period—pointed to the present interval of Grace, during which the great spiritual harvest is being garnered, so the "seven years" of famine (another *complete* period) look onward to that which shall follow the present dispensation. After the going forth of the Gospel of God's grace has accomplished its Divine purpose, and "*the fulness of the Gentiles be come in*" (Rom. 11: 25), the Holy Spirit will depart out of the world, and there shall come that season which Scripture denominates "*the great tribulation.*" Many are the passages which refer to that season. It is termed "*the time of Jacob's trouble*" (Jer. 30: 7), for then will be the season of Israel's darkest hour. It was to this Daniel referred when he said, "There shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time" (Dan. 12: 1). Concerning this same period the Lord Jesus spake, when He said, "For in those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be. And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved" (Mk. 13: 19, 20). It will be the time when Satan is cast down to the earth, when the Antichrist shall be here in full power, and when the storm of God's judgment shall burst upon the world. Morally and spiritually, it will be a time of "famine," and, like that which typified it in the days of Joseph, it shall be "very grievous" (Gen. 41: 31). Moreover, the sphere encompassed by God's sore judgments in that day will be no local one, but just as we are told that the dearth of old was not confined to Egypt, but that "*the famine was over the face of all the earth*" (41: 56), so in Revelation 3: 10 we are told, the "*Hour of Temptation*" comes upon "*all the world*, to try them which dwell upon the earth." It was of this same period that

Amos prophesied, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send *a famine* in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord. And they shall wander, from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east; they shall run to and fro to seek the Word of the Lord, and shall not find it" (Amos 8: 11, 12). At present the world is enjoying the years of plenty, and how little it believes in the coming time of "famine," now so near at hand! Be warned then, dear reader, and "Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near" (Isa. 55: 6); for, if you are left on earth for the coming Day of Wrath, it shall be said, "*the harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved*" (Jer. 8: 20).

62. *Joseph is now seen dispensing bread to a perishing world.*

"And when all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread: and Pharaoh said unto all the Egyptians, Go unto Joseph; what he saith to you, do" (41: 55). "It was a wonderful thing that the despised and rejected Jew should be the passport to the favor of Pharaoh; a wonderful thing that the rejected Jew should be exalted into the place of a Saviour for a famine-smitten world; it was a wonderful thing that this rejected Jew should be the *only* Saviour for that starving world. Equally true and wonderful is it today that Jesus the rejected Jew is the passport to the favor of God; that He is 'the Way, the Truth, and the Life,' and that 'no man cometh unto the Father but by Him'; wonderful that this rejected Christ should be exalted into a Saviour for a famine-smitten world; wonderful that this rejected Christ is the *alone* Saviour for a starving world.

"Joseph was sent by his father to his brethren that he might be a blessing unto them, and they refused; then God turned their sin so that while it should remain as a judgment to them, it might become a blessing to others. In sending His Son to fulfill the promises made to the fathers, God would have brought covenant and numberless blessings to Israel; they refused, and God has made use of their blindness and sin to turn salvation to others. He has made the very sin and blindness of the people to be the occasion of grace and mercy to the whole world. 'Through their fall

salvation is come unto the Gentiles' (Rom. 11:11)."—Dr. H.

63. *Joseph alone dispensed the Bread of Life.*

It is beautiful to observe here how Pharaoh directed all who cried to him for bread to go unto Joseph: "And when all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread: and Pharaoh said unto all the Egyptians: *Go unto Joseph*; what *he* saith to you, do" (41:55). May we not say this was the Gospel for Egypt, the good news that Joseph was the appointed Saviour, the glad tidings that whosoever was hungry might go to Joseph and obtain relief. How perfectly this foreshadowed the present Gospel of God's grace! When a guilty and convicted sinner, with a great hunger in his soul, cries unto God, what is His response? Why, does He not refer all such to the person of His blessed Son! Only in Christ is salvation to be found, for "neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other Name under heaven, given among men whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). Just as of old Pharaoh said to the Egyptians, "Go unto Joseph: what *he* saith to you, do," so, upon the Mount of Transfiguration the Father said to the disciples of Christ, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye *him*" (Mat. 17:5), and this is what He is still saying to men.

64. *Joseph became a Saviour to all peoples.*

"And all countries came into Egypt to Joseph for to buy corn; because that the famine was so sore in all lands" (41:57). Joseph was raised up by God to meet a world-wide need. The "dearth" was in "all lands" (41:54). But God, through Joseph, made ample provision to supply the wants of all. There was nothing provincial about the bounties which Joseph dispensed, he readily gave to each alike, no matter whether it was the Egyptians, his own brothers, or strangers from distant lands, all were fed. And how blessed to know this is equally true of the Antitype! God's Saviour for sinners is no provincial one. He is for both Jew and Gentile, rich and poor, educated and illiterate, old and young, men and women—all, alike, may find in Him that which can satisfy their deepest need, the Gospel is for every creature, and its terms are, "*Whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life.*" And just as peoples from "all countries came to Joseph," so those who

will sing the new song in heaven shall proclaim, "Worthy art Thou to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for Thou wast slain, and didst purchase unto God with Thy blood *men of every tribe*, and tongue, and people and nation" (Rev. 5:9).

65. *Joseph had illimitable resources to meet the need of all.*

"And Joseph gathered corn as the sand of the sea, very much, until he left numbering; for it was without number" (41:49). How abundant was God's provision! He provided with no niggardly hand. There was to be amply sufficient for every one that applied for the alleviation of his need. And how this reminds us of those blessed expressions which we meet with so frequently in the Epistles! There we read of "the riches of His grace" (Eph. 1:7), yea, "the exceeding riches of His grace" (Eph. 2:7). There we read of God being "rich in mercy" (Eph. 2:4), and, again, of His "abundant mercy" (1 Pet. 1:3). There we read of "the unsearchable riches of Christ" (Eph. 3:8), for "in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2:9). And again we are told, "The same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him" (Rom. 10:12).

Thank God, the Saviour He has provided for us is possessed of illimitable resources. There is no shortness or strainness in Him. There is *infinite* value in that precious blood which He shed upon the Cross to make an atonement for sin. There is *infinite* pity in His heart toward sinners. There is *infinite* readiness and willingness on His part to receive *all* who will come to Him. There is *infinite* power in His arm to deliver and keep that which is committed unto Him. There is no sinner so depraved that Christ's blood cannot cleanse him. There is no sinner so bound by the fetters of Satan that Christ cannot free him. There is no sinner so weary and despondent that Christ cannot satisfy him. The promise of the Saviour Himself is, "Come unto Me, *all* ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Mat. 11:28). O, sin-sick soul, put Him to the test for yourself, and see. Come to Christ just as you are, in all your wretchedness and need, and He will gladly receive you, blot out all your iniquities, and put a new song into your mouth. May God, in His grace, cause some despondent ones to prove for themselves the infinite sufficiency of His Son.

XLV. JOSEPH AND HIS BRETHREN, DISPENSATIONALLY CONSIDERED

Since we left Gen. 37-38 nothing more has been heard of the family of Jacob. Joseph is the one upon whom the Holy Spirit has concentrated attention. In Gen. 37 we saw how Joseph was sent by his father on an errand of mercy to his brethren, inquiring after their welfare; that Joseph came unto them and they received him not; that, instead, they envied and hated him, and sold him into the hands of the Gentiles. Then, we have followed his career in Egypt, and have seen how that the Egyptians, too, treated him badly, casting him into the place of shame and humiliation. Also, we have seen how God vindicated His faithful servant, bringing him out of prison-house and making him governor of all Egypt. Finally, we have learned how that Joseph's exaltation was followed by a season of plenty, when the earth brought forth abundantly, and how this in turn, was followed by a grievous famine, when Joseph came before us as the dispenser of bread to a perishing humanity. But during all this time *the brethren* of Joseph faded from view, but now, in the time of famine they come to the front again.

All of this is deeply significant, and perfect in its typical application. Joseph foreshadowed the Beloved of the Father, sent to His brethren according to the flesh, seeking their welfare. But they despised and rejected Him. They sold Him, and delivered Him up to the Gentiles. The Gentiles unjustly condemned Him to death, and following the crucifixion, His body was placed in the prison of the tomb. In due time God delivered Him, and exalted Him to His own right hand. Following the ascension, Christ has been presented as the Saviour of the world, the Bread of Life for a perishing humanity. During this dispensation the Jew is set aside: it is out from the Gentiles God is now taking a people for His name. But soon this dispensation shall have run its appointed course and then shall come the tribulation period when, following the removal of the Holy Spirit from the earth, there shall be a grievous time of spiritual famine. It is during this tribulation period that God shall resume His dealings with the Jews—the brethren

of Christ according to the flesh. Hence, true to the anti-type, Joseph's brethren figure prominently in the closing chapters of Genesis. Continuing our previous enumeration we shall now follow the experiences of the brethren from the time they rejected Joseph.

66. *Joseph's brethren are driven out of their own land.*

In Gen. 37 the sons of Jacob are seen delivering up Joseph into the hands of the Gentiles, and nothing more is heard of them till we come to Gen. 42. And what do we read concerning them there? This: "Now when Jacob saw that there was corn in Egypt, Jacob said unto his sons, Why do ye look one upon another? And he said, Behold, I have heard that there is corn in Egypt: get you down thither, and buy for us from thence; that we may live, and not die. And Joseph's ten brethren went down to buy corn in Egypt. And the sons of Israel came to buy corn among those that came: for the famine was in the land of Canaan" (42:1-3, 5). Canaan was smitten by the scourge of God. It was eaten up by a famine. Jacob and his family were in danger of dying, and the pangs of hunger drove the brethren of Joseph out of their land, and compelled them to journey down to Egypt—symbol of the world. This was a prophecy in action, a prophecy that received its tragic fulfillment two thousand years later. Just as a few years after his brethren had rejected Joseph, they were forced by a famine (sent from God) to leave their land and go down to Egypt, so a few years after the Jews had rejected Christ and delivered Him up to the Gentiles, God's judgment descended upon them, and the Romans drove them from their land, and dispersed them throughout the world.

67. *Joseph was unknown and unrecognized by his brethren.*

"And Joseph was the governor over the land, and he it was that sold to all the people of the land. And Joseph's brethren came, and bowed down themselves before him with their faces to the earth. And Joseph knew his brethren, but they knew not him" (42:6, 8). Joseph had been exalted over all the house of Pharaoh, but Jacob knew it not. All these years he thought that Joseph was dead. And now his family is suffering from the famine, the scourge of

God, and his sons, driven out of Canaan by the pangs of hunger, and going down to Egypt, they know not the one who was now governor of the land. So it has been with Jacob's descendants ever since the time they rejected their Messiah. They received not the love of the truth, and for this cause God has sent them strong delusion that they should believe a lie. They know not that God raised the Lord Jesus: they believe He is dead, and through all the long centuries of the Christian era a veil has been over their hearts, and the beginning of the tribulation period will find them still ignorant of the exaltation and glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

68. *Joseph, however, saw and knew his brethren.*

"And Joseph saw his brethren, and he knew them" (42:7). Yes, Joseph "saw" his brethren, his eye was upon them, even though they knew him not. So the eye of the Lord Jesus has been upon the Jews all through the long night of their rejection. Hear His words (as Jehovah) through Jeremiah the prophet, "*For mine eyes are upon all their ways*: they are not hid from My face, neither is their iniquity hid from Mine 'Eyes'" (16:17). So, too, through Hosea, He said, "I know Ephraim, and Israel is not hid from Me" (5:3).

69. *Joseph punished his brethren.*

"And Joseph saw his brethren, and he knew them, but made himself strange unto them, and spake roughly unto them.....and he put them all together into ward three days" (42:7, 17). We quote here from the impressive words of Dr. Haldeman: "Joseph was the cause of their troubles now. Joseph was punishing them for their past dealing with himself. The secret of all Judah's suffering during the past centuries is to be found in the fact that the rejected Messiah has been dealing 'roughly' with them. He has been punishing them, making use of their wilfulness and the cupidity of the nations, but, all the same, punishing them. 'My God will cast them away, because they do not hearken unto Him: and they shall be wanderers among the nations' (Hosea 9:17). 'For I say unto you, Ye shall not see Me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.' (Matt. 23:38, 39) 'That upon you may come all the righteous

blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zecharias, son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation (nation)' (Matt. 23:35, 36). Nothing can account for the unparalleled suffering of this people, but the judgment and discipline of the Lord."

70. Joseph made known to them a way of deliverance through Substitution.

"And he put them all together into ward three days. And Joseph said unto them the third day, this do, and live, for I fear God. If ye be true men, let one of your brethren be bound in the house of your prison; go ye, carry corn for the famine of your houses.... And he took from them Simeon, and bound him before their eyes" (42:17-19, 24). Once more we quote from Dr. Haldeman's splendid article on Joseph:

"On the third day he caused Simeon to be bound in the place of his brethren, and declared that by this means they might all be delivered, in the third day era, that is to say, on the resurrection side of the grave. On the day of Pentecost, the apostle Peter presented our Lord Jesus Christ as the risen one whom God had exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour unto Israel, declaring that if the latter should repent of their evil and sin toward Him whom He had sent to be Messiah and King, He would accept His death as the substitution for the judgment due them; that He would save them and send His Son again to be both Messiah and Saviour."

71. Joseph made provision for his brethren while they were in a strange land.

"Then Joseph commanded to fill their sacks with corn, and to restore every man's money into his sack, and to give them provision for the way; and thus did he unto them" (42:25). Although they knew not Joseph, and although he spoke roughly unto his brethren and punished them by casting them into prison, nevertheless, his judgments were tempered with mercy. Joseph would not suffer his brethren to perish by the way. They were here in a strange land, and he ministered unto their need. So it has been throughout this dispensation. Side by side with the fact that the

Jews have been severely punished by God, so that they have suffered as no other nation, has been their miraculous preservation. God has sustained them during all the long centuries that they have been absent from their own land. God has provided for them by the way, as Joseph did for his erring brethren. Thus has God fulfilled His promises of old. "For I am with thee, saith the Lord, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee; but I will correct thee in measure, and I will not leave thee altogether unpunished" (Jer. 30:11). And again; "Thus saith the Lord God; although I have cast them far off among the heathen, and although I have scattered them among the countries, yet will I be to them as a little sanctuary in the countries where they shall come" (Ezek. 11:16).

72. Joseph was made known to his brethren at the second time.

This was emphasized by Stephen in his parting message to Israel; "And at *the second time* Joseph was made known to his brethren" (Acts 7:13). At their first visit, though Joseph knew his brethren, they knew not him. It was on the occasion of their second visit to Egypt that Joseph revealed himself to them. How marvelously accurate the type! The first time the Lord Jesus was seen by His brethren after the flesh, they knew Him not, but when they see Him the second time He shall be known by them.

It is significant that the Holy Spirit has singled out this highly important point, and has repeated it, again and again, in other types. It was thus with *Moses* and Israel. "And it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown, that he went out *unto his brethren*, and looked on their burdens; and he spied an Egyptian smiting a Hebrew, one of his brethren. And he looked this way and that way, and when he saw that, there was no man, he slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand" (Ex. 2:11, 12). And how did his brethren appreciate his intervention on their behalf? They despised him; they said, "Who made thee a prince and a judge over us" (Ex. 2:14). They said, in effect, as Israel said of Christ, "We will not have this Man to reign over us" (Luke 19:14). But *the second time* (after a long interval, during which Moses was hid from them) that he appeared unto them, they accepted him as their Leader.

It was thus with *Joshua* and Israel. The first time that *Joshua* appeared before the Nation was as one of the two "spies" who brought to them a favorable report of the land, and counselled his brethren to go up and possess it. But Israel rejected his message (Num. 13). It was not until long after when *Joshua* came before the people, publicly, for the *second* time, that they accepted him as their Leader, and were conducted by him into their inheritance.

The same principle is illustrated, again, in the history of *David*. *David* was sent by his father seeking the welfare of *his brethren*; "And *Jesse* said unto *David* his son, take now for thy brethren an ephah of this parched corn, and these ten loaves, and run to the camp to thy brethren. And carry these ten cheeses unto the captain of their thousand, and look how thy brethren fare, and take their pledge" (1 Sam. 17:17-18). But when he reached them, they resented his kindness, and their "anger was kindled against *David*" (See 1 Sam. 17:28), and it was not until years later that they, together with all Israel, owned him as their King.

Each of these was a type of the Lord *Jesus*. The first time *He* appeared to Israel they received Him not; but at His second advent they shall accept Him as their Leader and King.

73. *Joseph's brethren confess their Guilt in the sight of God.*

"And *Judah* said, What shall we say unto my lord? What shall we speak? or how shall we clear ourselves? *God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants*" (44:16). There are several striking verses in the prophets which throw light upon the antitypical significance of this point. "And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I shall bring you into the land of Israel, into the country for the which I lifted up Mine hand to give it to your fathers. And there shall ye remember your ways, and all your doings, wherein ye have been defiled; and ye shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for all your evils that ye have committed" (Ezek. 20:42, 43). And again, "I will go and return to My place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek My face; in their affliction they will seek me early" (Hosea 5:15). So it was with *Joseph*; he did not reveal himself

to his brethren until they had acknowledged their "iniquity." And so will Israel have to turn to God in real and deep penitence before He sends His Son back to them (see Acts 3:19, 20).

74. *Joseph's brethren were also, at first, troubled in his presence.*

"And Joseph said unto his brethren, I am Joseph; doth my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him, for they were *troubled* at his presence" (45:3). How perfectly does antitype correspond with type! When Israel shall first gaze upon their rejected Messiah, we are told, "And they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced, and they shall *mourn* for Him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him as one that is in bitterness for his first born" (Zech. 12:10). As Israel shall learn then the awfulness of their sin in rejecting and crucifying their Messiah, they shall be "troubled" indeed.

75. *Joseph acted toward his brethren in marvelous grace.*

"And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near, And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither; for God did send me before you to preserve life. . . . Moreover he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them, and after that his brethren talked with him" (45:4, 5, 15). So shall it be when Israel is reconciled to Christ; "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness" (Zech. 13:1). Then shall Christ say to Israel, "For a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid My face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer" (Is. 54:7, 8).

76. *Joseph was revealed as a Man of Compassion.*

"And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren, And he *wept aloud*" (45:1-2). Seven times over we read of Joseph weeping. He wept when he listened to his brethren confessing their guilt (42:24). He wept when he beheld Benjamin (43:30). He wept when he made himself known to his brethren (45:

1-2). He wept when his brethren were reconciled to him (45:15). He wept over his father Jacob (46:29). He wept at the death of his father (50:1). And he wept when, later, his brethren questioned his love for them (50:15-17). How all this reminds us of the tenderheartedness of the Lord Jesus Christ, of whom we read so often, He was "moved with compassion," and twice that He "wept"—once at the graveside of Lazarus, and later over Jerusalem.

77. *Joseph revealed himself to Judah and his brethren, before he was made known to the rest of Jacob's household.*

So, too, we are told in Zech. 12:7, "The Lord also shall save the tents of Judah first."

78. *Joseph then sends for Jacob.*

"In Scripture, Judah stands for Judah and Benjamin considered together. You will note that it is Judah and Benjamin who are made prominent in the revelation of Joseph. Jacob in prophetic language signifies the Ten Tribes. Sending for Jacob and his household, in typical language, is sending for the Ten Tribes of Israel. Precisely as the type brings Judah before the self-disclosed Joseph, and then Jacob is brought into the land in the presence of Joseph, so the scriptures clearly teach us that after the Lord comes to repentant Judah and is received by them at Jerusalem, He will send for the remaining household of Jacob, for the lost and wandering tribes of Israel, to come into the land to own and greet him. 'And they shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the Lord, out of all nations' (Is. 66:20)"—*Dr. Haldeman.*

79. *Joseph's brethren go forth to proclaim his glory.*

"Haste ye, and go up to my father, and say unto him, thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me *lord of all Egypt*; come down unto me, tarry not. . . . And ye shall tell my father of *all my glory* in Egypt" (45:9, 13). In like manner, after Israel has been reconciled to Christ, they shall go forth to tell of the glories of their King: "And I will send those that escape of them unto the nations, to Tarshish, Pul and Lud, that draw the bow, to Tubal and Javan, to the isles afar off, that have not heard My fame, neither have seen My glory, and they shall *declare My glory* among the Gentiles" (Is. 66:19). And again: "And the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people as

a dew from the Lord, as the showers upon the grass, that tarrieth not for man" (Micah. 5:7).

80. *Joseph makes ready his chariot and goes forth to meet Jacob.*

"And Joseph made ready his chariot, and went up to meet Jacob his father" (46:29). Says Dr. Haldeman, "This is really the epiphany of Joseph. He reveals himself in splendor and Kingliness to his people. He meets Judah in Goshen first and then meets his father, the household of Jacob. This is a representation of the truth as we have already seen it. It is the coming of Christ in His glory to meet Judah first, and then all Israel. Our attention is specially drawn to his appearing to the people in chariots of glory. So of the greater Joseph we read, 'For, behold, the Lord will come with fire, and *with His chariots* like a whirlwind' (Is. 66:15)."

81. *Joseph settles his brethren in a land of their own.*

"And Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen; and they had possessions therein, and grew, and multiplied exceedingly" (47:27). Goshen was the best part of the land of Egypt (symbol of the world). As Pharaoh had said, "The land of Egypt is before thee, in *the best of the land* make thy father and brethren to dwell; in the land of Goshen let them dwell" (47:6). So Palestine, when restored to its pristine beauty and fertility, shall be "the best land" in all the earth; and there, in the Millennium, shall Israel have "possessions" and "multiply exceedingly."

82. *Joseph's brethren prostrate themselves before him as the Representative of God.*

"And his brethren also went and fell before his face; and they said, Behold we be thy servants. And Joseph said unto them, Fear not; for (am) I in the place of God?" (50:18, 19). The prophetic dream of Joseph is realized. The brethren own Joseph's supremacy, and take the place of servants before him. So in the coming Day, all Israel shall fall down before the Lord Jesus Christ, and say, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us; this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation" (Is. 25:9).

We close at the point from which we started. Joseph

signifies "Addition," and Addition is Increase, and "increase" is the very word used by the Holy Spirit to describe the dominant characteristic of the Kingdom of Him whom Joseph so wondrously foreshadowed. "Of the *increase* of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon His Kingdom, to order it and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever" (Is. 9:7).

XLVI. JOSEPH AND HIS BRETHREN EVANGELICALLY CONSIDERED

We have grouped together again the last nine chapters of Genesis, which treat principally of Joseph and his brethren, and have singled out from them the most prominent and significant of their typical teachings. In our last article, we contemplated the *dispensational* bearings of the type, and this is, no doubt, its primary application. But there is also a secondary one, one which we may term the *evangelical*, and it is this we shall now consider. Joseph here strikingly prefigures Christ as the Saviour of sinners, while his brethren accurately portray the natural condition of the ungodly, and in the experiences through which they passed as their reconciliation with Joseph was finally effected, we have a lovely Gospel representation of the unsaved being brought from death unto life. Continuing our previous enumeration, note.

83. *Joseph's brethren dwelt in a land wherein was no corn.*

They dwelt in Canaan, and we are told, "the famine was in the land of Canaan" (42:5). There was nothing there to sustain them. To continue where they were meant death, therefore did Jacob bid his sons go down to Egypt and buy from there "that we may live, and not die" (42:2). Such is the condition which obtains in the place where the ungodly dwell. Alienated from the life of God, they are living in a world which is smitten with a Spiritual famine, in a world which furnishes no food for the Soul. The experience of every unregenerate person is that of the Prodigal Son—there is nothing for him but the husks which the swine feed upon.

84. *Joseph's brethren wished to pay for what they received.*

"And Joseph's ten brethren went down to buy corn in Egypt" (42:3). It is striking to observe the prominence of this feature here. The word "buy" occurs no less than five times in the first ten verses of this chapter. Clearly, they had no other thought of securing the needed food than

by *purchasing* it. Such is ever the conception of the natural man. His own mind never rises to the level of receiving a *gift* from God. He supposes that he must earn God's approval, win God's favor, and merit God's acceptance of him. It was thus with Naaman, when he went to the prophet of God, to be healed of his leprosy. This was the Prodigal's conception—"make me as one of thy *hired* servants," that is, as one who *worked* for what he received. So it was here with Joseph's brethren. And so it is still with every natural man.

85. *Joseph's brethren assume a self-righteous attitude as they come before the lord of Egypt.*

When they appeared before Joseph he tested them. He "spoke *roughly* unto them" (42:7). He said, "Ye are spies; to see the nakedness of the land ye are come" (42:9). And what was their response? They answered him, "Nay, my lord, but to buy food are thy servants come. We are all one man's sons; *we* are *true* men; thy servants are no spies" (42:10, 11). It is thus when God begins His work with the sinner. He wounds before He heals, He wounds in order that He *may* heal. By His Spirit He speaks "roughly." He sends forth the arrow of conviction. He speaks that which *condemns* the natural man. And what is the sinner's first response? He resents this "rough" speaking. He repudiates the accusations brought against him. He denies that he is totally depraved and "dead in trespasses and sins." He attempts to vindicate himself. He is self-righteous. He boasts that *he* is a "*true* man"!

86. *Joseph's brethren were cast into prison for three days.*

"And he put them all together into ward three days" (42:17). This was not unjust, nor was it harsh treatment. It was exactly what they deserved. Joseph was putting these men into their proper place, the place of shame and condemnation. It is thus God deals with the lost. The sinner must be made to realize what is his just due. He must be taught that he deserves nothing but punishment. He must be shown that the place of condemnation and shame is where he, by right, belongs. He must be abased before he can be exalted.

87. *Joseph's brethren were now smitten in their Conscience.*

"And they said one to another, We are verily *guilty* concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this *distress* come upon us" (42:21). Notice they said this "one to another," not yet were their consciences active in the presence of *God!* The analogy holds good in the experience of the unregenerate. As God's work goes forward in the soul, conscience becomes active, there is deep "distress," and there is an acknowledgment of sin, but at this stage the awakened and troubled one has not yet come to the point where he will take the place of a *lost sinner before God.*

88. *Joseph makes it known that deliverance is by Grace.*

"Then Joseph commanded to fill their sacks with corn, and to *restore every man's money* into his sack, and to give them provision for the way: and thus did he unto them" (42:25). What a lovely touch to the picture is this! The Bread of Life cannot be purchased. It must be accepted as a free gift, if it is received at all. The terms of the Gospel are "*without money, and without price.*" And how beautifully was this shown forth here, when Joseph, as the type of Christ, orders the money to be restored to those who came to "buy the corn." Clearly, this was a foreshadowing of the blessed truth, "By *grace* are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8, 9).

89. *Joseph's brethren now enjoy a brief respite.*

"And they laded their asses with the corn, and departed thence" (42:26). They had been brought out of prison, the desired corn was obtained, and they were returning home. Their minds were now at rest, and we may well conclude that their recently disturbed consciences were quiet again. But not yet had they been brought into their true rest. Not yet had they been reconciled to Joseph. Only temporary relief had been obtained after all. Deeper exercises lie before them. And how strikingly this prefigures the experiences of the awakened sinner! After the first season of conviction is over, after one has first learned that salvation is by grace and not by works, there generally fol-

lows a season of relief, a temporary and false peace is enjoyed, before the sinner is truly and savingly brought into the presence of Christ.

90. *Joseph's brethren soon had their superficial peace disturbed.*

"And as one of them opened his sack to give his ass provender in the inn, he espied his money; for, behold, it was in his sack's mouth. And he said unto his brethren, My money is restored, and lo, it is even in my sack: and *their heart failed them*, and they were afraid, saying one to another, What is this that God hath done unto us?" (42: 27, 28). How true to life again! The type is easily interpreted. God will not allow the awakened soul to rest until it rests upon Christ alone. And, so, He causes the experiences of the way to dispel the false peace. What do we read of next? "And the famine was sore in the land. And it came to pass, when they had eaten up the corn which they had brought out of Egypt, their father said unto them, Go again, buy us a little food" (43: 1, 2). And again, the analogy is easily traced. The hunger of the Soul becomes more acute in the one with whom the Spirit of God is dealing; the sense of need is deepened; the "famine" conditions of this poor world are felt more keenly. And there is no relief to be obtained until, once more, he comes into the presence of the true Governor of Egypt.

91. *Joseph's brethren continued to manifest a legal spirit.*

"And their father Israel said unto them, If it must be so now, do this; take of the best fruits in the land in your vessels, and carry down the man a present, a little balm, and a little honey, spices and myrrh, nuts and almonds. . . . And the men took that present, *and they took double money in their hand*, and Benjamin, and rose up, and went down to Egypt, and stood before Joseph" (43: 11, 15). How like the soul that has begun to be exercised before God! Uneasy in conscience, and discerning more and more the vanity of the world, the sinner *redoubles his efforts to please God*. He turns over a new leaf and seeks harder than ever to win God's approval. How little these men knew Joseph—what did he, as Governor over all Egypt, want with their presents! And how little, as yet, the newly awakened soul, knows Christ! Joseph said, "These men shall dine with me at noon" (43: 16). So, too, *Christ* is the One who has

spread the feast. The word of the Gospel is, "Come for all things are now ready" (Luke 14:17). Christ is the *Provider*; the poor sinner is but the receiver.

92. *Joseph's brethren are now made happy again.*

"And they sat before him, the firstborn according to his birthright, and the youngest according to his youth: and the men marvelled one at another. And he took and sent messes unto them from before him: but Benjamin's mess was five times so much as any of theirs. And they drank, *and were merry* with him" (43:33, 34). Ah, what is man! Not yet had sin been told out. Not yet had a right relationship been established. Nevertheless, they could be "merry." A superficial observer would have concluded that all was now well. It reminds us of the stony ground in the parable of the Sower—he "heareth the Word, and anon *with joy* receiveth it; yet *hath he not root in himself*" (Matt. 13:20, 21). It is greatly to be feared that there are many such to-day. God's saving work goes much deeper than producing evanescent emotions.

93. *Joseph is determined to bring his brethren out into the light.*

"And he commanded the steward of his house, saying, Fill the men's sacks with food as much as they can carry, and put every man's money in his sack's mouth. And put my cup in the sack's mouth of the youngest, and his corn money. And he did according to the word that Joseph had spoken" (44:1, 2). There could be no settled or real fellowship between Joseph and his brethren until the wrong had been righted. There could be no communion of heart until full confession of guilt had been made. And this is the goal God has in view. He desires to bring us into fellowship with Himself. But He is *holy*, and sin must be confessed and put away, before we can be reconciled to Him.

94. *Joseph's brethren, at last, take their true place before God.*

They had been in the presence of Joseph, though they knew him not; they had been "merry" before him, and they were now going on their way light-heartedly. Joseph, then, sent his "steward" after them, saying, "Up, follow after the men; and when thou dost overtake them, say unto them, Wherefore have ye rewarded evil for good?"

(44:4). In like manner, the Lord sends His Holy Spirit to follow up His work in the heart of the awakened soul. The "steward" brought back the brethren into the presence of Joseph once more. Thus, too, does the Holy Spirit bring the convicted sinner back into the presence of God. And mark the sequel here: "And Judah said, What shall we say unto my lord? what shall we speak? *or how shall we clear ourselves? GOD hath found out the iniquity of thy servants*" (44:16). How blessed is this! What a change from their earlier attitude before him, when they affirmed they were "*true men*"! Now, they give up all attempt to clear themselves, and take the place of *guilty* ones before Joseph, acknowledging that God had "found out" their "*iniquity*." This is the goal Joseph has had before him all the way through. And this is the design of the Spirit's work in the sinner. Not till he ceases to vindicate himself, not till he comes out into the light, not till he owns he is *guilty*, and *unable* to "clear himself," can he be blest. Once the sinner acknowledges before God that he is undone, lost, it will not be long till Christ is revealed to him as the One who can fully meet his deep, deep need. So it was with Joseph and his brethren.

95. *Joseph made himself known to his brethren.*

"Then Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him, and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me. And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren" (45:1). How blessed to note the opening word here—"Then." Now that his brethren had acknowledged their guilt, there was no delay. That which had hindered Joseph from revealing himself sooner was now gone.

Notice, particularly, that as Joseph made himself known unto his brethren he cried, "Cause *every man* to go out from me." Thus it is when Christ reveals Himself to the self-confessed and needy sinner. None must come between the needy soul and the Redeemer. Away, then, ye priests, who pose as mediators. Away, ye ritualists who would interpose your ordinances as conditions of salvation. Away, all ye human interferers, who would get the poor sinner occupied with any but Christ alone. Let "*every man* go out."

96. *Joseph invites his brethren to come near to him.*

“And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near” (45:4). Unspeakably blessed is this. There is no aloofness here. All distance is done away with. So, too, in marvelous grace, the Saviour bids the poor trembling sinner “Come near” unto Himself. Joseph did more. He proclaimed in their ears a wondrous message; he said, “God hath sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and *to save your lives by a great deliverance*” (45:7).

“It is a *great* salvation, mark. It is not the limited, partial, mean salvation that some men would make it out to be—saving only those who help to save themselves, or saving them for a time, and allowing them to lapse and be lost again. Oh no, thank God, it is a salvation worthy of Himself, and such a salvation as only could result from that finished, faultless work of Christ on the Cross. And what but a great salvation could avail for sinners such as we? We are all of us great sinners; our guilt was great, our need was great, and nothing but a great salvation could be of any use to us. I hope you have it, friend. Don’t neglect it. ‘How shall we escape,’ the Spirit asks, ‘if we neglect so great salvation?’ (Heb. 2:3)” (Mr. Knapp).

97. *Joseph tells his brethren of full provision made for them.*

He said, “And thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen, and thou shalt be near unto me, thou, and thy children, and thy children’s children, and thy flocks, and thy herds, and all that thou hast. And there will I nourish thee; for yet there are five years of famine; lest thou, and thy household, and all that thou hast come to poverty” (45:10, 11). How this tells out, in type, what is in the heart of our blessed Saviour! He desires His redeemed to be near to Himself! He is to be no Stranger to them now. Moreover, He promises to sustain them—“there will I nourish thee” said Joseph, and the promise to all who believe is, “My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus” (Phil. 4:19).

98. *Joseph gives proof that he is fully reconciled to his brethren.*

“Moreover, he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them, and after that his brethren talked with him” (45:15).

The "kiss" betokened the fact they were forgiven. It speaks, too, of love. Thus was the Prodigal greeted after he returned from the far country and owned himself as a sinner. Notice, it was Joseph who kissed them, and not the brethren who kissed Joseph. So, also, it was the Father who kissed the Prodigal. God always takes the initiative, at every point. How blessed, too, the words which follow, "and after that his brethren *talked with him.*" Their fears were all gone now. Reconciled to Joseph, they could now enjoy his fellowship and converse with him. So it is with the saved sinner and his Saviour.

99. *Joseph's joy was shared by others.*

"And the fame thereof, was heard in Pharaoh's house, saying, Joseph's brethren are come, and it pleased Pharaoh well, and his servants" (45:16). "This is the Old Testament fifteenth of Luke. Sinners are received and reconciled; the lost is found; it is, as it were, 'life from the dead' with souls. 'And there is joy in the presence of God.' God and the angels, like Pharaoh and his servants, rejoice when sinners are brought to repentance. There is joy all around. Joseph rejoices; his brethren rejoice; Pharaoh rejoices; his servants rejoice" (Mr. Knapp).

100. *Joseph's brethren now go forth seeking others.*

Joseph gave to his brethren an honorable commission. He had said to them, "Haste ye, and go up to my father, and say unto him, Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt: come down unto me, tarry not. . . . And ye shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that ye have seen; and ye shall haste and bring down my father hither" (45:9, 13). So, too, in marvelous grace, the Lord commissions those whom He saves. He bids them go forth seeking others who know Him not. Joseph bade his brethren tell Jacob that he was alive, that God had made him "lord of all Egypt," and they were to tell of his "glory." In like manner, believers are sent forth to tell of a Saviour that is alive for evermore; of a Saviour whom God hath made "both Lord and Christ"; of a Saviour, who has been crowned with "glory and honor." Notice that twice over Joseph bade his brethren to make "haste" in their going forth (vv. 9, 13). So with us: there is to be no tardiness. The King's business "re-

quireth haste." The time is short, and precious souls are perishing all around.

101. *Joseph gives his brethren a word of admonition as they go forth.*

"So he sent his brethren away, and they departed and he said unto them, *See that ye fall not out by the way*" (45:24). And how much *we* need this word of exhortation. The flesh is still in us. The Devil seeks to stir up a spirit of rivalry and jealousy. But says the apostle, "The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all" (2 Tim. 2:24). If each of us were to heed this, there would be no "falling out by the way"!

We leave the reader to trace out for himself the typical application of the sequel. Joseph's brethren were faithful to the commission given them. They did not invent a message of their own as they approached Jacob. They had no need to do so. Joseph had told them what to say; their business was to *repeat* the words of Egypt's "governor." And God owned their message. The end for which it was designed was achieved. Jacob and his household—seventy souls in all—went down to Egypt and were royally received by Joseph. So, too, we do not have to invent our message. We are sent forth to "preach the Word," and as we are faithful to our calling, God will reward us, for He has promised that *His* Word "shall not return unto Him void." Let us be encouraged then by this example of the first Old Testament evangelists, and go forth into a famine-stricken world telling of One who is mighty to save, leaving the measure of our success to the sovereign will of Him who alone giveth the increase. Thus shall we have a share in discharging our honorable commission of giving the Gospel to every creature, thus shall we glorify God, and thus shall we be bringing nearer that glad Day when the One whom Joseph foreshadowed shall return to this earth, and, taking the government upon His shoulder, shall reign in righteousness and peace.

